

Easter means reunion for many 'exiled' Israeli Arabs

By Sami Aboudi

Reuter
IROIT, Israel — Every Easter Sunday thousands of Arab Christians gather in stone-walled churches in Iqrit and Kufir Birim, surrounded by the ruins of their hilltop villages.
Under 45-year-old Israeli orders, they cannot linger. After prayers for a return to their old homes and chats among the former villagers, the Arabs disperse to resume their "exile" in homes scattered across Israel.
Ever since Israel ordered them to leave their villages in 1948 for two weeks because of army operations on the nearby border with Lebanon, Iqrit and Kufir Birim villagers have lived in hope of returning.
After Israel sent warplanes and army sappers to destroy the two villages on Christmas Eve in 1951, villagers began returning on Christian holidays for what they call a family reunion.
"My only wish is to come back to my village before I die," said Awni Isbat, 66, one of a thousand Israeli Arabs who consider the old Greek Catholic village of Iqrit as home.

"We have become so much attached to our villages and lands in a manner I find hard to explain," said Imtihan Aiyoub, 62, a successful building contractor from Kufir Birim who now lives in the village of Jish. Three thousand others share his attachment to the Maronite settlement of Kufir Birim.
"We are refugees in our own country," Mr. Aiyoub said.
For nearly half a century, Iqrit and Kufir Birim villagers have petitioned successive Israeli governments, marched in protests, squatted on their former land and clashed with the police.
Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin appears as reluctant as his predecessors to let the villagers return, but under pressure from his leftist coalition partner Meretz he has set up a ministerial committee to discuss the issue.
"I am quite optimistic about it this time," said Meretz member Dedi Zucker, head of the parliamentary law committee that is also studying the fate of the villages.
While Iqrit and Kufir Birim villagers see their case as a humanitarian issue of "correcting an injustice," Israelis

fear establishing a precedent for hundreds of thousands of Arab refugees who lost their homes in the 1948 war.
"It wouldn't be a big deal to return a few thousand people back to their homes. However, this issue touches on the fears and concerns of many Israelis," said Mr. Zucker.
Like hundreds of Arab villages, Iqrit and Kufir Birim were depopulated after Jewish forces drove Arab armies from the former British colony to establish the Jewish state in 1948.
But unlike most Palestinians, who were scattered across neighbouring Arab countries, residents of Iqrit and Kufir Birim remained in Israel, close enough to see their villages every day.
Two weeks after their conquest, Jewish forces put women and children on army trucks and took them to nearby villages for "two weeks." Weeks turned to months. Even after the new state signed armistice agreements with Arab countries in 1949, Israel refused to allow them back.
Villagers from the communities thought they had won in 1951 when the high



Choir boys enter the Manger Square for religious celebrations in occupied Jerusalem under the watchful eyes of Israeli soldiers. The show of strength by the occupation authorities has always overshadowed every religious celebration in the occupied territories, a reminder of the Israeli army's grip on the Palestinian land (File photo)

court ruled in favour of their return. But the state simply declared the villages a closed military zone.
The next Christmas Eve, Israeli warplanes and sappers went to work. Mr. Aiyoub said Kufir Birim villagers stood on a hill, now named the "Crying Hill," watching the bombs fall.
"I can never forget that day. All of us — more than 1,000 people at the time — stood on the hill crying. With each explosion, I felt my

heart was being ripped apart," Mr. Aiyoub said.
The houses were rubble but the churches had escaped the worst. Walls of the Iqrit church still stood while the Maronite church in Kufir Birim required only minor repairs.
With Israeli authorities turning a blind eye, the churches were restored and maintained as the focus of a dream of return.
Easter, Christmas, special occasions draw the villagers

to their old home. A couple recently flew from Chicago to take wedding vows in the Kufir Birim church.
Older people, who were raised atop the lush green hills of what is now northern Israel, routinely leave wills requesting burial in the old villages of Iqrit and Birim.
"So far, we have won the right to go back when we are dead. Now we have to win that right sooner," said Mr. Isbat, hoping to live in Iqrit before he dies.

Moroccan police officer accused of molesting boys

RABAT (AP) — Still shocked by a huge sex crimes scandal involving police, Morocco plunged into another sordid affair Friday when a police officer is accused of molesting at least 20 boys.
Prosecutors heard evidence against police officer Bouchaib Arbad in the town of Al Jadid, 190 kilometres south of Rabat, to determine whether to charge him with death-penalty crimes.
At least 12 alleged accomplices are under investigation. Their identities and roles remain unclear.
The case comes less than a month after a police commissioner was sentenced to death for coercing more than 500 women and girls into sexual acts he videotaped. Sixteen other people, including several police officers, received prison terms.
The government Friday banned a march scheduled for Sunday by women's groups in Rabat to protest the abuse of Moroccan women they say was revealed by the first case. No reason for the ban was given.
The scandals have shaken public confidence in the powerful police, often accused of torture by human-rights groups, and led to renewed calls for curbs on their powers.
Mr. Arbad was accused of rape March 31 by two young men claiming to have been his victims.
According to the Moroccan

press, he admits to having assaulted numerous minors since 1983, but does not remember the exact number. Prosecutors have identified at least 20 so far.
A search of Mr. Arbad's apartments reportedly turned up 247 photographs taken of his victims. Some were nude and bound with ropes.
The Moroccan press reported that Mr. Arbad used his service handcuffs and revolver in subduing his alleged victims. Some were reportedly attacked before being booked at police stations.
Hundreds of people, some who walked the 15 kilometres from Azemmour, gathered outside the Al Jadid courthouse from dawn Friday as prosecutors grilled Mr. Arbad for a second day.
The case remains in the evidence-gathering stage, but prosecutors are reportedly working towards bringing charges of rape with violence against minors, a capital offense, according to the press.
Last month, Casablanca Police Commissioner Haj Mohammed Mustafa Tabet was sentenced to death for luring or forcing more than 500 women and girls into an apartment he kept for sexual exploits.
Investigators found 118 video cassettes, made over several years with cameras hidden in the walls. Copies of some cassettes were reportedly sold on an underground market.

'Britain foils Iranian air force bid

LONDON — British customs have smashed an ambitious plot by the Iranian air force to manufacture in Britain thousands of components vital to keep its fighters flying.
Coming at the same time as a tightening of British controls on defence-related exports to Iran and soon after the writer Salman Rushdie held his first-ever meeting with a British government minister, the customs operation seems certain to affect London's relations with Tehran.
At the heart of the affair is DBI Ltd, a small firm based near Maidenhead, west of London. The company is run by Canadian-born Richard Patrick, 75, a former wing commander in the Royal Air Force.
About a year ago the firm won a rolling order from Iran for turbine blades for General Electric J85 turbojets —

the type of engine which powers the Iranian air force's 65 ageing F-5 fighters, supplied by the United States in the days of the Shah.
Each engine has scores of turbine blades. Their function is to force air into the engine at high pressure, and they must be machined to extremely high levels of accuracy.
Customs have seized about 12,000 blades with a sale value of about £1 million. The customer was the Tehran government's Foreign Procurement Management Centre, although the end-user was to be the air force.
The orders were not for genuine General Electric (GE) blades but for reverse-engineered copies manufactured in Britain without GE's permission. The U.S. company is deeply displeased and has been co-operating closely with the British Customs op-

eration.
Customs' enquiries are continuing and more than one person is expected to be charged with violating the ban on arms supplies to Tehran. More firms could come under suspicion as the full picture emerges.
It is not the first time that Mr. Patrick has come to the attention of customs. In the late 1980s he and another of his firms were fined about £40,000 for shipping military equipment to Iran via London's Heathrow airport. The transactions were uncovered during a crack-down on illicit sales to Iran code-named Operation Armi (an anagram of Iran).
Customs have declined to comment on the latest case, explaining: "We do not discuss investigations which may be in progress." — *CAABU Bulletin*

Iraq to ask OPEC for reparations

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq will ask Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) members to compensate it for the stoppage of its oil exports since it invaded Kuwait in 1990, the government newspaper Al Jumhuriyah reported Saturday.
"The ministry of oil reiterated its serious endeavour to request OPEC members to pay reparations for the periods exports of oil came to a halt," the newspaper quoted an Oil Ministry source as saying. The source said Iraq will demand damages particularly from countries busting OPEC production quotas.
Iraqi oil officials have repeatedly stressed that immediately after the U.N. embargo against Iraq is lifted they will request an extra quota to make up for Baghdad's absence from the market.

'Time not on side of peacemakers'

LONDON — Writing after visiting the occupied territories, the director of the Council for the Advancement of Arab British Understanding (CAABU), Bernard Mills, has warned Foreign Office Minister of State Douglas Hogg that the peace process could falter unless the Israelis took substantive steps to improve the situation.
"My overall impression is that of weariness and an intense, sincere desire for peace amongst the adult population — but not at any price," he wrote. "The resumption of the peace talks with Palestinian participation must be preceded by a substantial improvement of the conditions under which the population is living and by a serious discussion agenda on the table in Washington."
Mr. Mills stressed: "In the absence of these two conditions, it is doubtful that the negotiators will have the support of the bulk of

the Palestinian population, the under-25s, without whose concurrence any interim agreement reached there will be worthless."
During his trip the CAABU's director conferred with a wide range of Palestinian and other officials, including five members of the Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace talks: Hanan Ashrawi, Sari Nusseibeh, Haidar Abdul Shafi, Zakaria Agah and Freij Abu Meidain. He returned via Cairo, where he met with Esmat Abdul Meguid, the Arab League secretary-general.
Urging the British government to "do all in its power" to persuade the Israelis to show flexibility "to allow the peace talks to be resumed in the right atmosphere and for tangible progress to be made on all fronts," Mr. Mills stressed: "Time, I fear, is not on the side of the peace makers. We cannot let this, possibly the last opportunity, slip by." — *CAABU Bulletin*

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Kuwaiti court clears Al Qabas in security case

KUWAIT (AP) — A state security court ruled Saturday that the Kuwaiti Al Qabas newspaper did not violate the national security laws by acquiring and publishing a list of military appointments. Editor Mohammad Al Saqr hailed the ruling as a victory for press freedom. "We knew we were innocent and the law suit was a spurious one from the Defence Ministry," he said. Defence Ministry spokesmen declined comment. The ministry took the newspaper to court last April after it published a list of 192 officers appointed to high-level army posts, including intelligence and operations. Kuwait's defence minister, Sheikh Ali Al Sabah, was reportedly livid, and high-ranking officers accused Al Qabas of giving Iraq and other hostile regimes military information "on a gold platter." Mr. Saqr and Khair Al Inzi, the reporter who acquired the list, could have faced fines and long jail sentences if convicted, and the paper could have been closed down. During the trial, they insisted that the information was not stamped confidential and that part of it was published in a Defence Ministry magazine. Al Qabas, the country's only independent daily, has campaigned for the resignation of officers who fled their posts when Iraqi tanks rolled into Kuwait on Aug. 2, 1990. The emirate's small army collapsed within hours of the invasion.

Kuwait, U.S. and Britain start exercises

KUWAIT (R) — The United States, Kuwait and Britain started joint naval exercises off Kuwait Saturday as part of defence pacts signed after the Gulf war. The U.S. Central Command in the Gulf said 700 U.S. personnel were taking part in the seven-day exercise codenamed "Eager Sentry 93-3." A Kuwaiti Defence Ministry official said the exercise was part of "continuous military cooperation between the three countries." He said two Kuwaiti vessels, Istighlal and Ghrouh, were taking part in the exercise but would not give the number of Kuwaiti personnel involved. The U.S. statement said the exercise "will demonstrate U.S. sea-borne capabilities and the continuing U.S. commitment to the security and stability of the Gulf." Kuwait announced Thursday that Kuwaiti and U.S. armed forces would start one month of war games in the Kuwaiti desert on April 15 involving 3,000 infantry from the two countries. The war games are the latest in a series held since Kuwait signed defence pacts with the United States, Britain and France after a U.S.-led alliance drove Iraqi forces out of Kuwait in February 1991.

Denktash clears Turkish troops from shooting

NICOSIA (AP) — Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash denied Friday Greek Cypriot reports that blamed Turkish troops for the fatal shooting of a Greek Cypriot soldier. He said it was a Turkish Cypriot soldier who opened fire. "I am sure he (the Turkish Cypriot soldier) is also sorry for claiming a life. But what else could he do to someone who approached his position despite warnings...?" Mr. Denktash told a political rally here. The Greek Cypriot national guard was killed in the no-man's land in war-divided Cyprus Thursday night. "We are sorry. It should not happen. The Greek soldier should not walk towards the Turkish position and he should behave in a more disciplined manner," Mr. Denktash said. Cyprus was divided into northern Turkish and southern Greek Cypriot sectors when Turkish troops invaded the island following an Athens-backed coup for union with Greece in 1974. Mr. Denktash is scheduled to open peace talks with the newly elected Greek Cypriot President Glafcos Clerides on May 24 in New York. "I hope the Greek side will not exaggerate the incident," Mr. Denktash said, seeking to avoid any harm to the peace process. The incident was the first fatal shooting on the dividing green line since 1989, when a Greek Cypriot guard shot dead a Turkish soldier.

Iranian rebels wait in wings for Tehran regime to crumble

By Dilip Ganguly
The Associated Press
ASHRAF CAMP, Iraq — On the hot, dusty plains northeast of Baghdad, thousands of Iranian rebels are waiting impatiently to strike across Iran's border to bring down a regime they believe is on its last legs.
The National Liberation Army (NLA) of Iran is the military wing of the Mujahadeen-e-Khalq, the Tehran regime's most implacable foes.
The Mujahadeen are bracing for a new wave of assaults across Iran because, as they see it, the regime is tottering — beset by a deepening economic crisis, political infighting and growing discontent among Iran's 60 million people.
"It's going to be very soon. You'll see an upsurge in our activities," Mohammad Mohaddessin, a senior aide of Mujahadeen leader Ayatollah Khomeini, told the Associated Press during a visit to Ashraf Camp.
That may be little more than wishful thinking by the Mu-

jahadeen, whose military forces have seen little action since 1988.
There is little doubt that Iran's economy is in bad shape, with most of the population living below the poverty line and increasingly restless.
But despite widespread protests and demonstrations in Iran, recent visitors to Tehran have seen no sign that the government is about to fall apart.
Still, Ashraf, one of five NLA bases along the frontier, is abuzz with a sense of impending action.
The eucalyptus-lined base lies 150 kilometres northeast of Baghdad and 80 kilometres west of the Iranian border.
"People think we're only a thorn in the side of the mullahs' regime," said Oza Alavi Taleghani, a 38-year-old mother of two children and the NLA's deputy commander.
"But we're ready to join in overthrowing the Tehran regime. This isn't the time to talk about how or when, but the time's ripe and we're ready."

Mujahadeen officials decline to say what the NLA's strength is. But diplomats in Baghdad believe it's probably around 15,000. Many are women.
Against Iran's 500,000-strong armed forces, the NLA clearly could not bring down the regime on its own, and the various opposition factions, ranging from monarchists to leftists like the Mujahadeen, remain badly fragmented 14 years after the revolution.
Still, Mr. Mohaddessin, director of the Mujahadeen's International Relations Department, said the rebels will move on Tehran once its sympathisers inside Iran cripple the country with sabotage and strikes and the people rise against the government.
He said conditions inside Iran make them optimistic "this regime will soon be going, and the NLA's in a position to deliver the fatal blow," he said. "We believe 1993 will be a very decisive year."
Government operations against Mujahadeen support-

ters inside Iran and the regime's assassination of key opposition figures abroad indicate that Tehran views them as a threat.
But how much support the rebels enjoy inside Iran is impossible to gauge.
The leftist Mujahadeen were allies of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's Islamic fundamentalists during the 1978-79 revolution that toppled the late Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.
But after the revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini turned on them and other non-fundamentalist allies. Thousands were slain in ferocious fighting before the Mujahadeen were defeated. Mr. Rajavi was driven into exile, first in France and then Iraq.
The Mujahadeen say they carried out bombings throughout Iran last year and organised riots in several major cities.
But diplomats in Tehran and reliable Iranian journalists say that the big protests were largely spontaneous and,

though critical of government policies, were not aimed at toppling the regime.
The NLA is no ragtag army. The units seen by correspondents were highly organised and disciplined force. The NLA also has armour, artillery and missiles, most of which it says were captured from the Iranians during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.
The NLA insists it is an independent force and not just a cat's paw of Iraq. But it clearly cannot mount cross-border operations without Baghdad's approval and is heavily dependent on Iraq for supplies.
The rebels carried out several major incursions into western Iran in the closing stages of the 1980-88 war and by all accounts fought well.
But since it ended, Iraq halted NLA operations and has kept them on a tight leash, even though relations with Tehran are strained.
Despite this, U.S. officials say Iran is trading with Iraq in defiance of U.N. sanctions.

So, in the short term, it's unlikely that Iraq is going to jeopardize that vital link by unleashing the NLA again. But the mutual distrust is deep and conditions could easily change.
Because of their enforced military inactivity since 1988, the Mujahadeen are driving to bolster their international political profile — no easy task given their alliance with Iraq.
For a decade, Washington has kept them at arm's length, citing their attacks on Americans during the Shah's reign.
The Mujahadeen contend the killings were the work of factions now split from the organisation.
With Washington voicing increasing alarm about Iran's military buildup and Tehran's alleged involvement in terrorism, they hope Bill Clinton's administration will turn their way. They recently launched a television ad campaign in the United States.
But the administration has yet to make any public pledge of support and, Washington officials stress, is unlikely to.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 73111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
17:30	Reves d'enfants
17:40	Le Cio de Fort Boyard
18:00	News in French
18:15	Le Journal de l'histoire
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Executive Stress
21:10	Documentary
22:00	News in English
22:20	Voltaire
PRAYER TIMES	
04:48	Fajr
06:08	(Sunrise) Doha
12:37	Dhuhr
16:13	Asr
18:46	Maghreb
20:26	'Isha'
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifeth, Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	

Anglican Church Tel. 630851. Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 652326	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824329	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will be partly cloudy and relatively cold, while winds will be northwesterly moderate to fresh, causing dust in desert areas. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.	
Amman	Min/Max temp. 8/18
Aqaba	14/27
Desert	5/22
Jordan Valley	12/25
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 20, Aqaba 31. Humidity readings: Amman 37 per cent, Aqaba 21 per cent.	

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Mahmoud Amer	888883
Dr. Abdul Aziz Taboun	680081
Dr. Jamal Al Jabari	796460
Dr. Mohammad Al Ghoul	790730
First pharmacy	661912
Ferdows pharmacy	778336
Al Azeema pharmacy	637055
Nairouki pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yaacoub pharmacy	648045
Shmeisani pharmacy	637660
Najib pharmacy	847632
IRBID:	
Dr. Fayed Al Qadhi	(-)
Akqas pharmacy	(-)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Mishal Hijawi	(-)
Khalilich pharmacy	983417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	
Rescue	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	291228
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896390
Public Security Department	63021
Hotel Complaints	628301
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	787111
Complaints	010230
Overseas Calls	121
Central Amman Telephone	623101
Repairs	661101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	731111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100

HOSPITALS

Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	08-53300
Queen Alia Int. Airport	08-53200
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hossein Medical Centre	81381/332
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn.	644281/6
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn.	642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Mallat, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmeisani	664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital	669131
University Hospital	845845
Al-Mushter Hospital	667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali	661275/7
Al-Abdi, Abdali	664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajireen	777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh	775112/6
Queen Alia Hospital	891611/5
Queen Alia Hospital	602240/90
Amal Hospital	674155
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	09983323
Zarqa National Hospital	09990560

Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)986732
Al-Hikmah Modern Hospital	(09)990990
IRBID:	
Princess Basma Hospital	(02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital	(02)272775
Ibn Al-Nafes Hospital	(02)347100
AQABA:	
Princess Faya Hospital	(03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53200-5, where it should always be verified.	
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
06:15	Aqaba (RJ)
07:30	Larnaca (RJ)

10:00	Jeddah (RJ)
10:05	Doha, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:10	Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
11:15	Beirut (RJ)
17:10	Madrid (RJ)
18:30	Brussels, Paris (RJ)
18:30	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:55	London (RJ)
19:30	Athens (RJ)
21:10	Rome (RJ)
21:10	Frankfurt, Geneva (RJ)
22:00	Vienna (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
07:05	Larnaca (CY)
09:05	Beirut, Rome (A2)
11:25	Beirut, Rome (A2)
14:30	Doha, Bahrain (GF)
16:05	Moscow (SU)
19:15	Larnaca (CY)
MARKET PRICES	
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
10:35	Cairo (GF)
11:30	Bahrain (GF)
14:30	Moscow (SU)
18:25	Larnaca (CY)
20:50	Beirut (ME)
DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
07:00	Aqaba (RJ)
09:30	Frankfurt (RJ)
11:30	Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:00	Rome (RJ)
13:00	Athens (RJ)
15:05	Damascus (RJ)
21:05	Aqaba, Cairo (RJ)
22:15	New Delhi (RJ)
22:25	Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:45	Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
23:00	Bangkok (RJ)
23:00	Jeddah (RJ)
Upper/lower price in fils per kg.	
Apple	700/700
Banana	680/680
Banana (Mekansar)	620/620
Beans	900/700
Cabbage	90/60
Carrot	180/120
Cauliflower	160/100
Cucumber (large)	120/60
Cucumber (small)	220/160
Eggplant	340/260
Garlic	500/400
Grapefruit	240/180
Leimon	400/300
Marrow (large)	400/300
Marrow (small)	200/150
Mint	100
Onion (dry)	320/260
Onion (green)	280/200
Orange	700/600
Pepper (hot)	260/200
Pepper (sweet)	260/200
Potato	280/200
Tomato	180/150
Spinach	100/50

PNC blasts Israel for 'state of war'

AMMAN (Petra) — Members of the Palestine National Council (PNC) in Jordan Saturday voiced their complete rejection and condemnation of "the state of war and siege waged by the Israeli occupation authorities against the Palestinian people in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip."

In a statement issued in Amman Saturday following a meeting of PNC members residing in Jordan called on the United Nations, its Security Council and permanent members of the Security Council to condemn all Israeli malpractices, to implement international legitimacy resolutions and to provide international protection for the Palestinian people under the auspices of the U.N. and in accordance with international charters and conventions until a full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories is achieved.

The PNC members also urged the international community and the U.N. in their statement, which was read by Deputy PNC Speaker Salem Al Zanoun in Amman, to force Israel to implement the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 on the treatment of civilians living under occupation. They also called on the Arab governments and the Arab League to intervene with all countries, regional and international organisations and the U.N. secretary general to work on lifting the economic siege imposed on the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. The PNC members called for convening an extraordinary meeting of the Arab Parliamentary Union and world parliamentarians in order to denounce the "inhuman Israeli measures against the Palestinian people."

They also demanded that the U.N. work on providing food and medical supplies to the Palestinian people and that the United Nations Works and Relief Agency (UNRWA) increase its assistance to Palestinian refugees. "Another demand by the Palestinian parliamentarians was that the Arab labour ministers, who are in Amman to participate in the Arab Labour Conference establish an Arab Fund to support Palestinian labourers."

Woman recovering following shooting incident in south

By a Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A woman tourist from Switzerland who was shot and wounded while on her way to the southern town of Tafila Friday night, was reported to be in relatively good condition yesterday and is expected to leave hospital soon.

Abdullah Hjar, director of the Al Hussein Medical Centre where the patient has been undergoing treatment for injuries sustained in the incident, told the Jordan Times that the woman was improving fast and could be discharged in a few days.

Earlier Saturday, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan the Regent and Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker visited the patient in hospital and were assured of her good condition. They wished her a speedy recovery. The woman, Anna Amacher of Bern, said she was travelling to Tafila along with two other Swiss women, when a single man blocked the path of their car trying to stop it.

When the women refused to stop their car, the assailant opened fire from a hand gun injuring the woman in the back seat.

The man, who was wearing an Arab headdress, wounded her in the arm and abdomen. Ms. Amacher told the Associated Press from her hospital bed, "I have no idea for what reason I was shot at." She said the black-haired tourist who said she is 34 years old. "He was crazy."

Looking pale and weak, she said she worked as a secretary at the Swiss consulate in London and was vacationing in Jordan with the two colleagues who worked at the Swiss embassy in Cairo.

The incident occurred near the agricultural project of Al Qadeish on the Amman-Shobak road, a police statement said.

The statement said after initial first aid at the Shobak Health Centre, the Swiss woman was flown by helicopter to the Al Hussein Medical Centre in Amman.

The suspect was detained and police are investigating the incident.

Crown Prince says manpower development depends on illiteracy eradication, spending cuts and pan-Arab efforts

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Arab World's accomplishment in the field of human resources development has been modest even by the standards of the developing world, simply because of the high levels of illiteracy among Arab societies, according to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent.

Nearly half of the Arab World is still illiterate and two-thirds of those are women, the Crown Prince said, adding that the Arab World continues to suffer from very limited and modest health services.

In an address delivered on behalf of Prince Hassan by Ahmad Al Lawzi, speaker of the Senate, at the opening of a pan-Arab seminar on human resources development, the Crown Prince said the Arab World is increasingly dependent on foreign food sources, many Arab communities lack basic services, and life expectancy rates are extremely low in many parts of the region.

It is true that oil wealth has helped some Arab states to develop modern and efficient infrastructures, yet this development did not spread to other parts of the Arab World which continue to suffer from poor planning, low educational levels, expensive development projects and rampant consumption practices, Prince Hassan continued.

In addition, all Arab states

have been spending a great margin of their revenues on armaments, and such expenditures exceed the total amounts spent by the Arab states on education, health and other basic services, he added.

While poor Arab countries witness continued population growth, they fail to ensure sufficient income to meet the basic requirements of their citizens, noted Prince Hassan.

The Arab World is approaching the 21st century with unsatisfactory development levels and therefore ought to act promptly on revising its plans and strategies, Prince Hassan urged. A nation of 50 per cent illiteracy will not be in a condition to confront the challenges of the modern age or those of the coming century, he added.

The primary aim of manpower development, the Crown Prince said, should be the eradication of illiteracy, especially among women; and that should be coupled with the availability of basic services in health, water and electricity.

This can be accomplished by reducing unnecessary rampant consumption and spending on armaments, he said.

The gap between rich and poor must be plugged, Prince Hassan said, adding that differences and imbalances in the rights and duties of men and women in the social, political and economic

fields must be corrected. Manpower development, he noted, will be incomplete unless it is achieved at the pan-Arab level.

Therefore, the Crown Prince added, Arab states ought to transcend their differences in order to attain real development.

He said the concept of development is linked to that of national security and the narrow-minded concept of providing police or military protection should be replaced with a move towards pan-Arab security.

Bigotry and jingoism can by no means be fought by arms, and respect for the state can not be displayed through muscle flexing, but rather through confronting problems with reason and creating the appropriate climate for equal opportunities in education and development, Prince Hassan concluded.

The seminar, which is organised by the Arab Thought Forum (ATF) in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is attended by academicians, intellectuals, writers and other scholars from the Arab World.

All Artiga, assistant U.N. secretary general and director of the Arab World's development programmes said in an address to the meeting that the Arab World was regrettably reliant on foreign assistance for basic requirements, mainly modern technology.

Calling on the Arab World to



Speaker of the Senate Ahmad Al Lawzi Saturday delivers an address on behalf of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, to the opening session of the Human Development in the Arab Region Seminar (Petra photo)

devise plans to reduce such dependence, Dr. Artiga said the Arab countries' imports of cereals alone cost \$22 billion annually, while their total external debt by the end of the 1980s exceeded \$140 billion.

In addressing the opening session, Mahboub Al Haq of UNDP headquarters in New York outlined the state of human development in the Arab countries.

According to Mr. Al Haq, about 40 million people live below the poverty line, and 60 million adults are illiterate, despite great wealth in many parts of the region.

Referring to Jordan, Mr. Al Haq said that the Kingdom belongs to the middle income and the middle human development categories.

With a relatively modest gross

national product (GNP) and per capita income reaching up to \$1,338, Jordan has made significant progress in human development; higher than not only the average for the region, but also for the developing world as a whole, Mr. Al Haq said.

A report on inter-Arab trade prepared by the UNDP will be reviewed in the three-day meeting.

Media experts debate government control, interference in reporting

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The integrity of the journalists vis-a-vis the existing laws and norms and governmental interference was one of the hot issues discussed at a recent World Net symposium grouping experts from Arab countries and the United States.

"If the government has anything to say, it has its own means to publish it," said Frank Morey, the White House correspondent for the Washington Times. "It would be better for the journalist not to publish anything than writing lies," he maintained.

Participants from Jordan, Lebanon and Algeria expressed concern over the social and political restrictions that influence the journalist's work and prevent him/her from objective reporting.

"The restricted journalist can never produce good work because he lacks motivation," a participant from Lebanon said. "In addition, the political bias that certain journalists are forced to take to satisfy regimes or leaders, stands as an obstacle to their progress and development."

In what he described as the friendly-environmental relationship between the press and politics, the Lebanese participant wondered if any sort of harmony can be reached between these conflicting

powers. "There is what is called the system of checks and balances," responded Marwan Muasher, Director of the Jordan Information Bureau in Washington and the spokesperson of the Jordanian delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace talks.

"Each party cannot trespass a certain limit, otherwise the issue in question is referred to court," Dr. Muasher said.

Citing the example of Jordan, he said that at present the judicial authority has the final say in conflicts that arise between the press and the government, but in the past, the government was the only party to issue the decision and decide the penalty.

"In the past, the government used to intervene in the editorial policy of the newspapers and a number of daily newspapers were closed several times," Dr. Muasher said.

Though he criticised the limited progress of the new Jordanian press and publication law, he pointed out that the situation has changed nevertheless. The Journalist, for instance, has the right to keep his/her sources of information secret.

"It is true," he admitted, that the law has limited this secrecy — by requiring that journalists reveal their sources in court in criminal cases only, but this is still a progressive stage that will help in

more openness, and is not the final one," Dr. Muasher maintained.

While participants voiced dismay over journalism in general in the Arab countries and the inability of Arab journalists to reach a professional level, Dr. Muasher said the press in all countries in the world is biased to a certain extent, even in democratic countries.

"The U.S. press for example does not differ a lot in its coverage of foreign policy news," he said.

"Pressures originate from different sources and take many shapes," Dr. Muasher said.

Mr. Morey disagreed and said that the U.S. press is not in fact the reflection of the U.S. government view, emphasising that most of the decisions taken by the government are discussed at length and are sometimes attacked by the press.

"In a recent poll in the United States over the U.S. aid to Russia, 80 per cent voiced their disapproval and a long debate followed," he pointed out. But Mr. Morey did admit that in the U.S. the protection of journalists' sources is still not fully comprehended and sometimes results in the imprisonment of many journalists.

World Net is a television arm of the United States Information Service (USIS).

Cabinet submits draft law banning Muslims from alcohol enterprises

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government has obliged Parliament by submitting a draft law banning Muslims from producing, selling and importing alcohol in Jordan, but the legislation is unlikely to be acted upon soon since there will be no extraordinary session of the legislative authority.

Even at that, the government reserves the right to withdraw the law and make amendments before the document is tabled for study and debate in the House, officials say.

Under constitutional provisions the law could be picked up and debated by the next Parliament, which, in all probability, will be elected later this year.

But there is no certainty that it would be passed since the political balance and numerical strength of the various forces in Parliament could undergo dramatic changes in the polls, observers say.

The two-page, seven-article law was approved by the Council of Ministers on March 30 and forwarded to Parliament the following day, which marked the end of the fourth and final regular session of the House.

The timing, which sources describe as no coincidence, deprived the House of any opportunity to debate the draft law, but fulfilled a constitutional obligation on the part of the government since the legislation was demanded by the House.

The draft law, a copy of which was obtained by the Jordan Times, does not call for an all-embracing ban on alcohol in Jordan.

Rather, it bans Muslims from importing, producing, and selling liquor in the Kingdom and from the serving of alcohol at official functions.

Muslims will also be banned from importing alcohol or "bringing alcohol (to the country)" and owning any facility to produce or

sell alcohol in any form or conditions.

Existing laws are no different, and those involved in the alcohol producing industry are all non-Muslims.

Licences for liquor stores and bars are issued in the name of Christians.

Supermarkets which sell liquor are issued special licences. The draft law empowers the cabinet to act upon the recommendations of a ministerial committee to make exemptions and "set the limitations and procedures" for exemptions until specific by-laws, and provisions, are finalised and enacted.

Violators face imprisonment for a term of not more than three years, but not less than one year, and a fine of not more than JD 10,000 but not less than JD 5,000.

Stocks will be confiscated and the "financial rights of the owner of the premises where the crime was committed" will be forfeited. The maximum penalty will be imposed in the case of "repeated violations."

The 22-member Muslim Brotherhood bloc in Parliament was the force behind the move, which came in the form of a House recommendation on Feb. 19, 1991, to the government, that such a legislation be drawn up and presented to the Chamber of Deputies as called for by the Judicial Committee of the House.

Constitutionally, the government is bound to draft and submit laws recommended by the House before the end of the immediately following session of Parliament, and hence the submission of the law on March 31.

Brotherhood sources said they had taken note of the various provisions of the draft law and were satisfied with the extent of ban imposed on Muslims from selling or producing alcohol.

But they reserved comment on their options, given the peculiar circumstances under which the law was formulated and presented to Parliament and the

relatively mild nature of its provisions.

"We will cross the bridge when we reach it," said a Brotherhood deputy, who preferred anonymity, obviously alluding to the option that the Judiciary Committee of the House could incorporate amendments and additions to the proposed law as and when the House picks up the issue.

By design or coincidence, the deputy was echoing the words of a senior official who shares a common belief, despite the manoeuvrings by Islamists, that Jordan will never have a ban on alcohol.

"The government has fulfilled its obligation and presented the law in time to Parliament," said the official.

"Now it is up to those who want the law enacted to move in whatever direction they want."

According to the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, "in practical terms the draft law is not introducing anything new; the existing laws, mostly related to trade and industry, ban any Muslim from owning any facility to manufacture, distribute or sell alcohol in the country."

But, the official noted, "the present laws are not stringently applied."

The subtlety with which the government handled the affair was also evident in the changes the draft law underwent before reaching the files of Parliament.

An earlier draft had nine articles and specified that tourism sites, including hotels, were automatically exempt from the ban on alcohol.

It also set certain time limits for the liquidation of distilleries and breweries, revoking the licences of liquor shops and disposal of stocks after the enactment of the law.

The final version, as presented to Parliament, contains no such provisions.

"The law is not going to be enacted anyway, so why bother to lace it with details," said the official.

6 win in pencil contest

By Ica Wahheh

Jordan Times Staff Reporter
AMMAN — They say beauty is in the eye of the beholder. In our case, the beholder is artist Salam Kanaan and the beauty is ... a beast — a pencil-drawn horse, the work of 9-year-old Zakaria Taher, first-prize winner of a children's drawing competition.

The competition, the first of its kind in Jordan, was initiated by Mr. Kanaan to "allow for the free expression of the children's imagination by means of the pencil."

The six winners were announced at the British Council Wednesday afternoon, and the young Mr. Taher received JD 50 from Mr. Kanaan who is a painter.

The other five winners Lara Abu Sneh, Fadi Omari, Sara Ahmad, Marion Bataineh and Rana Sawtari, received JD 45 each.

Before a meagre audience, attributed to lack of proper promotion, the winners, some red-haired and solemn, would receive the winning certificates from Mamoudh Bisharat, a Maennas and Jordan's first art collector, and return to the safety of a parent's hand with a dazed look of triumph in their innocent eyes.

The theme of their drawings, selected by Mr. Kanaan, is the horse, and the medium, pencil on paper.

To the artist's surprise, (and, according to him, to that of the postman's of the area in Paris where he lives and works) 1,535

drawings reached him from children in Jordan aged between eight and 13.

After the selection process, 39 drawings were put on display, reflecting the wide range of the children's imagination.

Representations of horses run from unicorns to chess piece horses, covering real-life horses grazing freely or bridle, Pegasus — the winged horses —, race horses, muzzled horses or wild mustangs running from the cowboy's rope, a symbolic Palestine horse fallen, horses by the pyramids, an effigy horse, under sea horses (not sea horses, the tide carefully lifted us) and happy families of horses with mother, father and children playing under free skies.

Deliberate or not, the drawings express the children's wishes and feelings and it is interesting to see how their young minds perceive the world around them.

Mr. Kanaan's aim, that of trying to "make the children aesthetically aware" and allowing their imagination to run free, seems to have been reached. His initiative is laudable and might create a welcome precedent.

Now he is looking for sponsors who could help the competition become an annual event.

And judging from the flushed, pleased faces of the children and their parents, it is worth the effort.

The 39 drawings are on display at the British Council through Monday.

University's English Day programme sends various messages to faculty

By Mark Eliot

Special to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — A gathering at the Department of English at the University of Jordan Wednesday was not only a celebration of the accomplishments of the students but a forum to air various messages.

English Day attracted most of the 470 students in the department to a two-hour production of skits, songs and poems.

Organised and directed by the students, it clearly demonstrated an air of pride and independence for one of the largest departments on campus.

Although humorous and enjoyable, the programme was an obvious example of the successes and problems present in the department.

The faculty were the target of which contained underlying messages, some of which were not well received.

On the less serious side, one student suggested that the administration kept the classrooms unheated on purpose. "This is to show solidarity with our brothers in Mari Al Zohour (an area in southern Lebanon where a large group of Palestinians, expelled by Israel have been since December)," he joked.

There does seem to be a difference in the objectives of the students and the professors. Many students told the Jordan Times that they did not want to pursue a teaching career.

Hanada Al Masri, a junior, said "many of us want to work for companies or the government where our abilities would be useful."

Sami Faddah, another junior, described the difficulty in practicing English. "Ten per cent of our

day is spent studying the language, but we don't have many opportunities to speak outside the classroom," he said.

Supported by other students present, Mr. Faddah described the hope a theatre programme will begin soon which would facilitate the practice and exploration of the English language.

During a break in their skits, students Ali Salameh and Assad Nasir described one point they hoped would be conveyed to the faculty and the administration.

"There are gaps between students and teachers in our department. As demonstrated by one of our skits, students feel that most of the professors are too cold and formal with us," they said.

Ayman Rashad, a senior and one of the organisers of English Day, lamented the lack of political activities in the English Department.

"The students would like to see the professors become more active on important issues such as the situation with the Palestinians and in Bosnia," he said.

When asked why the skit on this issue was one of the only ones performed in Arabic, Mr. Rashad replied, "We want to make sure that this message of support for the intifada will be understood by all of the students here."

The growing conservatism of the student body was clearly evident.

Almost 90 per cent of the students in the English Department are women. Despite this statistic, their presence on the stage was kept to a bare minimum.

Acknowledging that much of the conception and organisation of the programme was done by the women, Mr. Rashad said it is not right for men and women to

mix together on the stage.

"I am a religious man," he said, "and I believe that women should not be participating in events such as these."

Issam Safadi, professor of English and American literature, said he understood the students' feelings of alienation from the faculty. "It is a difficult situation where actually both sides need to work together to close the gap," he said.

"There are 470 students in the department. With only 15 faculty it is very difficult to provide students with the attention they deserve," he said.

"Furthermore, the goal and the job of the teachers are to educate students to the best of their ability in the English language," Dr. Safadi said. "Most students do not want to pursue a career in teaching; many professors see the students more concerned about grades rather than the subject," he asserted.

"However, activities such as English Day are very helpful in bringing the students and professors closer together."

One professor, who asked to remain anonymous, said that the English Department is not, and should not be, a forum for political activities. "We do understand the students' interest in what is occurring in Palestine and Bosnia. This is clear from the essays they write," he said. "However, they must understand that the purpose of this department is to teach English, despite the sympathies that the faculty has on an individual basis for these political situations," the professor asserted.

He said that outside of the classroom students can and should be active in these issues.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art exhibition by Nawaf Al Bukhari at the Phoenix Art Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition entitled "The Legend of Petra II" by artist Suha Shoban at the National Gallery for Fine Arts.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "Re-creation" by Jordanian, French and Iraqi artists, inspired by a sculpture by Iraqi artist Mohammed Hussein Abdullah, at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of a children's drawings at the British Council.

FILM

- ★ French film entitled "Tirez Sur Le Pianiste" at the Zarqa Chamber of Commerce at 7 p.m.
- ★ Feature film entitled "Private Benjamin" at 5 p.m. at the American Centre (1980, R-rated-100 min.)

Mutah hosts literary conference

MUTAH (Petra) — Minister of Culture Mahmoud Al Samra Saturday deputed for His Majesty King Hussein at the opening of the First Conference on the Jordanian Literary Movement organised by Mutah University and attended by delegates from universities and organisations in seven Arab countries.

Jordan considers this conference as a means for further bol-

stering cooperation among Arab states and interaction among Arab scholars, said the minister.

Dr. Samra opened an exhibition of traditional heritage organised by Mutah University in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and the French Embassy in Amman.

The exhibition displays items relating to the history of the Jordanian village of "Kathraha"

in southern Jordan.

The delegates of the four-day meeting will review 51 working papers on Arab plays, story-writing and autobiographies of several Arab writers.

Representatives of universities and other organisations in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Tunisia, Yemen, the United Arab Emirates and Jordan are taking part in the meeting.

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Sunday's Economic Pulse

Israel to punish Palestinian labour collectively

AS a Jordanian and an Arab I am not gratified by the fact that tens of thousands of Arab Palestinians are working hard to serve the Israeli economy at low wages, especially when they are instrumental in building military roads and illegal settlements or filling the undesirable jobs in Israeli industry, agriculture and services.

However, this situation happened and became a fact of life over years of extended Israeli occupation and the imposition of Israeli hegemony over the Palestinian economy in such a way as to prevent the growth of indigenous industry, agriculture, housing and other construction activities and depriving the Palestinians, in the process, of the possibility to create enough jobs for their own manpower.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin took last week a single-minded decision to expel Arab labourers working in Israel, as a collective punishment, ostensibly in response to security incidents and knife-stabbings which were committed by some desperate labourers under persistent oppression, frustration, humiliation and degradation which reached a level that rendered endangering one's own life not a big sacrifice.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin should have understood the reasons which led the Palestinian citizens to despair, and, accordingly, been motivated to facilitate the peace process and the recognition of human and national rights of the Palestinians,

and accept the inevitable withdrawal from the occupied territories which were transformed by the intifada from a cash-cow into a swamp in which Israeli soldiers are hopelessly bogged down.

Instead, Mr. Rabin opted for inhuman solutions, such as the collective punishment of stateless labourers who are innocent, and have no objective except earning a living for their families.

Governments are not expected or required to give domestic jobs to foreign labourers, but if they do, they should accept their concomitant duties and responsibilities towards guest workers. Under no circumstances should a civilised government expel its guest labourers collectively. Only racial and fascist regimes are expected to commit such crimes and violations against human rights.

Mr. Rabin's unreasonable decision will harm the Israeli economy far more than harming the Palestinian economy. Against each dollar paid to Palestinian labourers in Israel, the Israeli employers receive a minimum of five dollars value of gross production. Only due to the huge American financial subsidies can Israel tolerate the losses it inflicts upon itself from occupation and nervous measures taken against the intifada, while the vulnerable Palestinian society hardly receives any support or compensation from any source.

Due to the nature of the hard labour undertaken by Palesti-

nians, we have no doubt that Mr. Rabin will fail in replacing Palestinian workers with unemployed Israeli labour. Had it been possible to fill the available openings by Israeli citizens, the Palestinians would not have been employed in the first place. The Israeli government was, by no means, giving priority to Palestinian employment. On the other hand, the importation of manpower from abroad is ruled out due to the prohibitive cost of housing, air transportation, and higher wages payable in foreign exchange.

Since Mr. Rabin's decision cannot be justified, or even understood, in economic terms, as it does not make economic sense, it must have other hidden objectives, such as killing the spirit of resistance to the occupation through starving the Palestinian population, which is harsher than deportation. He may also have in mind making life impossible in the occupied territories and pressuring the people to gradually leave their homeland in search for jobs in Jordan and other Arab countries. Such a design will not be allowed by Jordan, which will not be less firm than the Lebanese government in confronting effective deportation. The solid position expressed by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan towards the Israeli plan should send the right signal to the Israeli government which should not make another blunder.

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

Hopeless in Gaza

in Washington between Palestinians and Israelis, the most important, because of its size and population, is the West Bank. But recently rather more attention has been focused on the other two — the Golan Heights and the Gaza Strip. The Golan Heights have been the subject of speculation over a possible agreement between Syria and Israel which would involve the return to Syria of some of the land it lost in the 1967 war, as for the Gaza Strip, it has become nothing less than an international scandal.

The Gaza Strip has of course been on the world's agenda for much longer than the Golan Heights. In various partition plans for Palestine, starting with that recommended by the Peel Commission in 1936, Gaza was part of the Negev which, since

that was an area in which hardly any Jews had settled, was allotted to the Arabs. After the 1948 fighting, the area was swollen by more than 200,000 refugees (in 1936 the population of the Gaza sub-district was only 94,000). On the first day of the Suez fighting the area was occupied by Israeli forces, but these were compelled to withdraw as part of the post-Suez settlement, and U.N. forces took their place. They in their turn were evicted by the Israelis in the 1967 war, and ever since the Gaza Strip has been cut off not only from the other rump of Palestine, the West Bank, but also from Egypt.

Gaza was described by one 19th century traveller as standing in relation to the desert as a port does to the sea, and that is what it should be — a point of entry to

wider spaces. Instead it has been turned into monstrous slum, its inhabitants becoming ever more crowded, poverty-stricken, harassed, shot at and frustrated, with little work, dignity, or hope. Everyone who goes to the Gaza Strip agrees that something must be done — but what?

The first essential is the withdrawal of all Israeli security forces, understandably scared and trigger-happy, together with the settlers on the coast whose comparative affluence mocks the misery behind them. Ideally there should be a land corridor connecting the Strip to a similarly liberated West Bank, but that is hardly practical politics at this juncture. Egypt would be reluctant to welcome back its former wards, always an uneasy responsibility, who would only swell the

rank of the unemployed and disenchanted.

A writer in Hadashot (Israeli press, Middle East International 446) made the rather surprising suggestion that "the most rational thing for us to do is to establish Palestinian state in the Gaza Strip. Negotiations with such a state about the future of the West Bank will be easier than with a body sitting in Tunis." There would have to be considerable financial and technical assistance to put such a state on its feet, combined with an interim U.N. presence, but compared with what is being talked of for Yugoslavia and the USSR, that is peanuts. A bold idea like this is needed if there is to be a ray of hope in a situation which is otherwise quite hopeless.

Prisons don't hold will

ISRAELI PRIME Minister and Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin's decision to close the West Bank and Gaza Strip and his army's stand along the border between Israel proper and the occupied Arab territories are Israeli testimonies that Palestinians and Israelis can no longer tolerate the situation. Of course, it is not terribly intelligent on behalf of the Israeli prime minister, his government and his colleagues to think that by imprisoning the whole of the Palestinian population that they can break that people's will to fight and resist occupation. If anything, Mr. Rabin's iron fist policy will only backfire.

Mr. Rabin and the ruling class in Israel have in the last 26 years conspired and connived to destroy the Palestinian national economy and turned the Palestinians into slave labourers servicing Israeli agriculture, industry and illegal settlement building. By his actions, including mass deportation of Palestinians, Mr. Rabin has proved that he is more belligerent than his predecessor, Yitzhak Shamir. During the Israeli elections of 1992 Mr. Rabin campaigned on a platform of peace. He got elected by the Israeli people because he advocated an end to the conflict with the Palestinians. But soon after his coming to power the Labour leader resorted to his old 1988 iron fist policy and heated up the confrontation with the Palestinians in a failed effort to end the intifada. He even started talking about separate deals with the Arab states to press the Palestinians for more concessions. He went back on his election promise to halt the building of settlements on occupied Arab land. Of late, Rabin started calling Palestinians names; he said the Palestinians were insects that should not be allowed to "crouch" among Israelis. Palestinians, many of whom service the Israeli economy only too feed their children seek no glory, and they are only too aware that they will end up dead or imprisoned for life. They are constant reminders to the Israelis and the world at large that Palestinians have had enough of Israel's "benign" occupation. They want the Israelis to understand that they will have no peace unless the Palestinians themselves have peace. And it is for Mr. Rabin and his generals to read this, understand and act accordingly. The Palestinians will continue to hammer out the message no matter what methods the Israelis use to quell the revolt. They have demonstrated that when it comes to ingenuity they always outwit their Israeli "cousins."

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL DUSTOUR daily Saturday cautioned the Arab parties to the peace talks against letting carried away in their optimism over Israel's decision to allow Faisal Husseini to lead the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations. We are not belittling the importance of involving Arab Jerusalem in the talks on the side of the Palestinian delegation, but we do not hide our suspicions about Israel's intention when making such an announcement at this point in time, said the paper. By announcing its acceptance to allow Mr. Husseini to be the head of the delegation, Israel is not making any substantive change in its own position with regard to the status of Jerusalem which it considers as its united capital, said the daily. It said that Israel has, all along, adamantly rejected involvement of Arab Jerusalem in the negotiations which are based on Resolution 242, added the paper. Including Mr. Husseini in the negotiations could be an Israeli ploy to mislead the Arabs, simply because the Israelis still hold on to their intransigent position regarding granting the Palestinian people their rights in their homeland, it added. While making its announcement, said the daily, Israel has reiterated its position as to its occupation of southern Lebanon and its total rejection of repatriating the Palestinian expellees in implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 799. The paper said that the Arabs ought to hold on to their closed ranks and refuse to give in to any Israeli manoeuvres and acts of deception.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour bitterly criticised the United States and its Western allies with regard to the question of Islamic fundamentalism. It is noticed that while Washington pursues a worldwide campaign against the Islamists, calling them terrorists, it is also maintaining its contacts with the Islamists leaders in Egypt and Jordan, and other parts of the Arab World, said Saleh Qallab. As we notice, Washington and its allies attacking the Islamists of Algeria, accusing them of being terrorists bent on destroying their country, we find many of these Islamists taking refuge in Germany, France and the United States, the writer added. He said that Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, who is being accused of leading the anti-Mubarak campaign, is a resident of the United States, which continues to claim that it is fighting off the Islamists and the terrorists. I am not accusing the Islamists of being stooges in the hands of the Western intelligence services, but rather I am critical of the West, especially of the United States, which adopts a double standard dealing with the Arab and Islamic World, said Mr. Qallab. The writer said that what Washington aims at with the policy is to distort the image of the Arab World and to cause further splits between its various factions and between these factions and their ruling regimes.

Following is an editorial that appeared in the last edition of the Middle East International.

PROPOSALS for a settlement in what used to be called Yugoslavia have produced maps of extreme complexity, more like those used in the study of geology than politics. Yet if acceptance of some such map is the only alternative to continued fighting it will be generally welcomed. It would represent the triumph of jaw-jaw over war-war.

One of the strangest aspects of the Yugoslavia fall-out has been the sight of a number of western countries, which are at least in tradition and culture Christian, groping for ways in which to help a Muslim minority while threatening its notionally Christian attackers with the severest penal

ties. What would the Crusaders who marched through the lands which later became Yugoslavia on their way to Jerusalem have made of that? But the whirling of time often brings in the strangest revenges. Nothing in a world so fluid — and dangerous — as the present can be ruled out. In a decade where Leningrad becomes St. Petersburg again the unthinkable has to be thought about.

It would not require the insight of Alice's Duchess to find a moral in the break-up of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, and the moral must be that territorial anomalies had better be corrected while this can still be done by negotiation rather than waiting for it to be done by war. Of the three elements in the negotiations which have been going on intermittently

in Washington between Palestinians and Israelis, the most important, because of its size and population, is the West Bank. But recently rather more attention has been focused on the other two — the Golan Heights and the Gaza Strip. The Golan Heights have been the subject of speculation over a possible agreement between Syria and Israel which would involve the return to Syria of some of the land it lost in the 1967 war, as for the Gaza Strip, it has become nothing less than an international scandal.

The Gaza Strip has of course been on the world's agenda for much longer than the Golan Heights. In various partition plans for Palestine, starting with that recommended by the Peel Commission in 1936, Gaza was part of the Negev which, since

Human Rights Committee concludes session, examines individual complaints

By Waleed Sadi and Alfred de Zayas

ON APRIL 7, 1993, the United Nations Human Rights Committee concluded its forty-seventh session at U.N. Headquarters in New York. Besides examining the periodic reports of many states parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including the reports of Iran and of the Dominican Republic, the committee concluded the examination of numerous individual complaints, notably of cases concerning fair trial, the imposition of the death penalty, the right to freedom of expression, and the principle of non-discrimination.

The Human Rights Committee, although not a judicial body as such, performs functions that are comparable, at the regional level, to those of the European Commission and Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg and of the Inter-American Commission and Court of Human Rights in Washington and San Jose, respectively. In this sense, it is an emerging international court of human rights. At present 67 states recognise the competence of the committee to examine complaints from individuals who claim that their rights under the International Covenant (118 states parties) have been violated. Whereas the committee's "views" (final decisions on the merits) are not legally binding as, for instance, the judgments of the International Court of Justice, states parties to the Optional Protocol to the Covenant largely honour them, in the spirit of international cooperation.

Among the important decisions of this session of the committee, one may highlight several views concerning inmates on death row in two countries. While in some cases the committee found that no provision of the covenant had been breached, in other cases the committee established that certain guarantees of fair trial had not been observed. To the extent that the complainants had been denied fair proceedings, as required under Article 14 of the covenant, the committee found that their convictions and sentences were defective and that the complainants should be released. In one case, Victor Francis vs. Jamaica, the committee criticised the failure of the Court of Appeals to issue a written judgment, which frustrated the complainant's right to review

of conviction and sentence without delay, constituting a violation of Article 14, paragraphs 3(c) and 5; in that case, the committee also found violations of articles 7 and 10 in view of the ill-treatment to which the author had been subjected in the prison. In another case, Howard Martin vs. Jamaica, the committee rejected the complainant's argument that prolonged detention on the death row constituted torture and inhuman treatment under Article 7 of the covenant; the committee found that the so-called "death row phenomenon" did not constitute a violation of the covenant, since the complainant was availing himself of his right to review of the conviction and sentence, which necessarily entailed a prolongation of detention. The committee therefore affirmed its established jurisprudence on this point, which is at variance with the view of the European Court in the Soering vs. United Kingdom judgment.

A particularly interesting debate revolved around the issue whether the production and deployment of nuclear weapons constituted a violation of the right to life under Article 6 of the covenant. Over 6,000 Dutch citizens appealed to the committee, claiming to be victims of a violation of their rights by virtue of the 1979 NATO decision to deploy cruise missiles in the Netherlands and by the stationing of other nuclear weapons in the country. The committee declared the case inadmissible, stating that the procedure laid down in the Optional Protocol was not designed for conducting public debate over matters of public policy, such as support for disarmament and issues concerning nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. The committee found that the authors could not be deemed to be "victims" under the covenant, which requires a showing that an act or omission of a state party has already adversely affected the enjoyment of the complainant's rights guaranteed in the covenant, or that a violation of the complainant's rights is imminent. The committee also took the opportunity to consider whether the case was a mere *actio popularis*, and as such inadmissible. In this connection, the committee noted that nothing precludes large numbers of victims from bringing a

case under the Optional Protocol. The mere fact of large numbers of petitioners does not render their communication an *actio popularis* if they can show how they have been personally affected.

In the last few years, the committee has been examining an increasing number of allegations of violations of the principle of equality and non-discrimination. In the cases of John Ballantyne, Elizabeth Davidson and Gordon McIntyre against Canada, the committee considered whether a law adopted in Quebec, prohibiting the use of any language other than French in advertisements, violated the complainants' rights under articles 19, 26 and 27 of the covenant. The complainants were a painter, a designer and an undertaker by profession, who claimed to be adversely affected in their business because they could not advertise in English. The committee found that the complainants' right to freedom of expression, including commercial expression, protected by Article 19 of the covenant, had been breached. It found no violation of articles 26 and 27.

Whereas the committee strives to adopt decisions by consensus, members frequently append concurring or dissenting opinions. The Canadian language case provided an opportunity for eight committee members to expand on other aspects of the case. Whereas most members did not think that the cases raised issues of "minority rights" as such, four members thought it prudent to insist that the term "minority" not be interpreted too narrowly. They argued that persons should not be excluded from the protection of Article 27 where their group is an ethnic, linguistic or cultural minority in an autonomous province of a state, but is not clearly a numerical minority in the state itself, taken as a whole entity. Indeed, Article 50 of the covenant requires states parties to ensure the application of the covenant in all its provinces. One individual opinion advocated affirmative action for French-speakers and would have applied Article 27 of the covenant to justify measures aimed at encouraging the use of the French language in Quebec, including measures to restrict the commercial use of English.

would have reversed the committee's decision on admissibility in view of the possibility of the complainants to seek a declaratory judgment against the contested law.

The committee and its working group also adopted numerous interlocutory decisions, including many to seek additional information from complainants and states parties, and others finding that the admissibility criteria had been met. These cases will be examined at the committee's forthcoming summer and fall session (three weeks each) to be held in Geneva.

As a result of many new accessions and ratifications to the Optional Protocol, the number of cases submitted to the Committee for examination has increased exponentially. In order to process this case load expeditiously, a corresponding strengthening in the number of staff servicing the committee is imperative. Of course, any such increase has financial implications that must be met by states parties.

The committee, which examines individual complaints in camera, does not yet hold hearings. Bearing in mind that many complainants and states parties have offered to make personal appearances for oral argument, it is possible that the committee may amend its rules of procedure and allow hearings, as, for instance, before the European and American regional human rights commissions.

Besides examining individual complaints, the committee endeavours to clarify the scope of the provisions of the covenant. For instance, during its forty-seventh session, the committee continued debate over a "general comment" on Article 18 of the covenant, which concerns freedom of conscience and religion. Soon the committee will focus on Article 25, access to public service, and Article 27, minority rights.

Among the controversial issues discussed in the committee's public meetings was the present position of the government of Iran on the death sentence spoken by the late Ayatollah Khomeini against the Iranian writer Salman Rushdie. Various issues arising under articles 6, right to life, 9, freedom of person, and 19, freedom of expression, were discussed.

Iran human rights record questioned

By Waleed Sadi

THE EXAMINATION of Iran's second periodic report got bogged down for the second session running due to the many questions that were put to the Iranian delegation that came from Tehran for this purpose. The United Nations Human Rights Committee (HRC) decided late Wednesday to take up Iran's human rights situation again in the summer session of the committee, thus making the examination of Iran's human rights record the longest ever conducted by the human rights body created under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

What disturbed the members of the committee most were the persistent reports submitted by several non-governmental organisations that speak of hundreds of executions still being carried out by Tehran for reasons that cannot by any stretch of the mind condone such executions. Amnesty International, advanced to the human rights experts documented information that people in Iran are being either executed, tortured or illegally detained for political and religious reasons.

The covenant calls on all state parties to phase out the death penalty and until they do so it insists that its application be limited to the most serious crimes. Tehran submits that adultery, armed robberies and drug-related crimes are all samples of what Iranian authorities define as very serious crimes warranting the application of the death penalty. On this score, the committee members took issue with the Iranian delegation and asked that the government review as a matter of urgency its definition of serious crimes.

Several experts took exception also to Iran's policy of amputation of arms and hands of thieves. One Muslim member reminded the Iranians that Islam condoned the application of such an extreme punishment only on condition that the state provides its people with full economic security in order that people not be forced to commit theft for securing their livelihood. The leader of the Iranian delegation explained in his rebuttal that in fact his government is reviewing such punishment and now applies no less than 14 conditions before it resorts to amputation.

On drug-related crimes, it

was pointed out that the problem is also a socio-economic issue that cannot be addressed solely by punitive means. Again the Iranians responded that in fact they are also reconsidering their stiff legislation on this point but insisted that the phenomenon is very serious in Iran warranting extreme punishment to serve as a deterrent.

The subject of Salman Rushdie was also brought up by several members who pointed out that the decree issued against Mr. Rushdie contravenes many of the articles of the covenant. Surprisingly, the Iranian delegation stated that the decree issued against Mr. Rushdie is not a governmental decree that carried an official character. "There is no court order or an official declaration, from the government or an official decision to take the life of Mr. Rushdie."

"The decree on Rushdie is simply a religious decree, called a 'fatwa' in the Islamic religion. It is up to the Muslim people to apply it but not the government of Iran," replied the Iranian delegation. In this vein, the Iranian side asked point blank how Mr. Rushdie can be allowed to have his right to free expression in such a blatant manner. A delegate referred to Article 19 of the covenant on the freedom of expression and pointed out that the exercise of that right is predicated on the need to respect public order, morals and the dignity and respect for religions. Mr. Rushdie, it was stated, violated the right of others as well as their faiths and beliefs by ridiculing Islam in the manner that he did.

The deliberations on the case of Iran will continue when the HRC resumes its work again in July 1993. At that summer session, the experts on the committee are expected to agree on a collective verdict concerning the Iranian human rights situation. It is expected that the final comments of the committee will address most of the issues that the members have found troubling. Still, the most encouraging sign that came from Iran during this session was that Tehran is reconsidering much of its legislation in order to become more compliant with the terms and provisions of the ICCPR.

The writer is on the editorial staff of the Jordan Times and a member of the U.N. Human Rights Committee.

Authorities plan summer water-rationing programme

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) is currently preparing a water rationing programme for various governorates and districts to be implemented this summer, according to Mutaz Bilbeisi, Ministry of Water and Irrigation secretary general.

Regardless of the level of rainfall last winter, WAJ has no alternative but to adopt a distribution programme to ensure that the limited amounts of water are distributed fairly to various regions, Mr. Bilbeisi told the Jordan Times.

He remarked that Jordan's population is growing at the rate of nearly 3.8 per cent annually and the country has just absorbed more than 300,000 people who returned from the Gulf states in the wake of the Gulf war.

In addition, the Kingdom's limited sources of drinking water and the recurrent water shortages oblige the concerned authorities to take this measure each summer when water consumption normally increases, said Mr. Bilbeisi.

The Ministry of Water and Irrigation estimates that Jordan consumes at least 838 million cubic metres (mcm) of water annually, but at least 320 mcm more are required to meet the needs of the population, industry and agriculture.

Continuing to tap different underground resources to increase the country's water supply, the ministry is conducting a feasibility study on the desalination of brackish water, Mr. Bilbeisi said.

He said this slightly salty water is found in abundance in the

following areas: Sukhneh, Azraq, the Jordan Valley, Hisban, Deir Allah and Kreimeh.

If implemented, the desalination process will require the consumption of fuel energy to first pump the water from underground aquifers and then process it into a potable state, said Mr. Bilbeisi.

Surface water, which accumulates from running water in valleys, springs and floods, averages about 695 mcm but more than half of that amount is lost to evaporation, Mr. Bilbeisi explained.

To collect more rain water, the ministry is constructing additional dams, primarily in areas overlooking the Jordan Valley where Jordan's agricultural industry predominates.

According to ministry sources, plans are under way for the construction of a new dam at Karameh with a 55 mcm capacity. When completed this dam will be the second largest in Jordan after the King Talal Dam which has a capacity of 81 mcm.

Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) Secretary General Abdul Aziz Wishah told the Jordan Times that the present dams are almost full and there was no fear of any shortages of irrigation water this year.

Unlike drinking water, irrigation water is in abundance and there was no need for a rationing programme, he added.

Dr. Wishah said a great deal more water was collected in the dams from the rainfall this year, but some had to be let out in degrees during the winter, to avoid flooding in the Jordan Valley.

Palestinians want to return to talks

(Continued from page 1)

back to the talks.

Mr. Hussein told Reuters in Tunis: "Things are going in a positive way."

He said PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat will go to Cairo very soon to see Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, whose talks in Washington with U.S. President Bill Clinton apparently led to the breakthrough.

The scheduled for the exiles' repatriation, the number, the timing still needed to be clarified, he said.

The Palestinians will make an internal decision on the talks which would be made known after a meeting of Arab parties expected next week, he said.

In Amman, an official of a hardline PLO faction said the talks to admit Mr. Hussein to the talks was a ploy to put pressure on Palestinians to attend the next round.

"The American proposal regarding Hussein is just a political manoeuvre," PLO executive Committee member Tayseer Khaled, whose Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) wing is opposed the talks, told Reuters.

Mr. Khaled said the Americans told Mr. Hussein he would be admitted to the team not in his capacity as a citizen of Jerusalem, but as a resident of the West Bank town of Jericho.

They also told him his entry to the negotiations would not lead

to any changes in the basis of the peace process which stipulated that the status of Jerusalem would not be raised until the final phase of the negotiations, he said.

Israel's army chief of staff said Friday it would become clear during 1993 whether Middle East peace efforts were going to progress or fail, heralding a "new hostile deployment" in the Arab World.

"During the year we'll know whether we're in a deep process, or whether we're on the way to a dead-end," Lieutenant-General Ehud Barak said in a television interview.

He said a dead-end would mean: "The beginning of a countdown, even if it takes years, to a new hostile deployment in the Arab World."

Gen. Barak added that Syrian President Hafez Al Assad would not go to war with Israel without superpower backing.

"Assad understands the reality has changed... This, in my opinion, leads him to understand that examining the political options is the only game in town," he said.

Gen. Barak said Israel's closure of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip was effective for the time being.

He warned that unless employment opportunities improved for Palestinians unable to leave the occupied territories because of the ban, more people could support violence.

Iraq denies firing at U.S. planes

(Continued from page 1)

anonymity, said the four warplanes were flying at about 2,400 metres above the range of the anti-aircraft artillery.

Mr. Boucher said the planes — three F-16s and an F-4G — were on a routine monitoring mission in the zone. When they were fired on, the three F-16s unloaded the bombs, he said.

He said it was not immediately clear how much damage was done to the site.

The anti-aircraft Battery fired on the U.S. jets at 1:05 p.m. Iraqi time — 1005 GMT — north of the 36th Parallel, the Pentagon said.

The "no-fly" zone north of that latitude was imposed by the U.S.-led allies in April 1991; the southern zone, south of the 32nd Parallel, was declared in August ostensibly to protect Shiite Muslims.

American, British and French warplanes patrol the two "no-fly" zones.

Libya says no surrender of suspects

(Continued from page 1)

Egyptian newspapers credit Mr. Mubarak's trip to Europe and the United States for the council's rejection of U.S. efforts to impose an oil embargo. But a more likely cause was opposition from Western countries that rely heavily on Libyan oil.

Egypt and other Arab countries have been trying to mediate an end to Tripoli's crisis with the West. If the United States prevailed and an oil embargo were

imposed, Libya would be severely affected because oil sales are its primary source of income.

The Libyan news agency JANA, monitored in Cairo, said Mr. Mubarak's chief political aide Osama Al Baz briefed Col. Qadhafi on results of the president's trip.

JANA said Col. Qadhafi's talks with Mr. Arafat dealt with the problem of almost 400 Palestinians expelled by Israel to Lebanon.

The mass expulsion has stalled the Middle East peace process.

Arab declaration calls for linkage between development and population-related issues

AMMAN (J.T.) — An Arab

ministerial population conference jointly organised by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) and the League of the Arab States held here last week has adopted the Second Amman Declaration on Population and Development in the Arab World as amended during the meeting.

The declaration "expresses the Arab point of view on the population question within the context of the inter-related requirements of sustainable development concerned with economic, social, cultural and environmental affairs."

The declaration constitutes the contribution of the Arab World to the forthcoming United Nations International Conference on Population and Development due to be held in Cairo, Egypt, in 1994, an ESCWA press release said.

Forming part of the regional preparations to the Cairo conference 1994, the conference examined during its five-day proceedings key-population related issues in the Arab World: Population growth and structure; population policies and programmes; population, environment and development; population distribution and internal migration; international migration; women and development and family planning, health and family well-being.

The declaration says that in order to express the Arab point of view on the population question within the context of the inter-related requirements of sustainable development concerned with economic, social, cultural and environmental affairs, the Arab governments welcomed the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in September 1994.

Cairo.

The declaration adds that an integrated approach to the population issue requires consideration of its various dimensions, such as size, growth rates, geographical distribution, national and pan-Arab security and other characteristics, as well as recognition of the fact that these dimensions interact and, consequently, should not be treated separately as isolated aspects in any population policy; it should also be recognised that these population dimensions are influenced by the processes of reproduction, mortality and internal and external migration.

The Arab States which adopt a policy of modifying population growth rates may integrate population policies into the framework of national development plans. Present and future demand for family planning must be met. The Arab State should be called upon, regardless of their stand on population growth, to provide for family planning services as a basic human rights of couples.

Effective measures to overcome current population problems in the Arab World through diligent efforts to achieve sustainable development will be severely affected by the increasingly rapid and radical changes that have taken place on the world stage in recent years and which necessitate the adoption of a collective self-reliance strategy within the Arab World, as well as close cooperation with the developing countries. They also necessitate diligent efforts to change the status of the Arab economy in the present world economy with a view to attaining further self-reliance, mutual equitable interdependence and active and positive involvement in international economic relations, says the declaration.

Objectives

The declaration calls for the establishment of general principles to coordinate the population policies of the Arab countries, and provision of the means for their implementation and monitoring. Endeavours should also be made to implement Arab agreements regulating the movement of labour among the Arab countries in such a way as to ensure maximum developmental benefits for both the Arab countries of origin and the Arab host countries and grant priority to Arab labour in the latter.

Recommendations

The Second Amman Declaration recommends that population policies should be formulated within the framework of a comprehensive strategy for sustainable development, paying due regard to the mutual interaction among them.

Special attention should be paid to human development and the necessary resources should be allocated to its achievement in a manner consistent with population policies, since human development is an objective in itself. Resources should be allocated to achieve human development, especially in social sectors such as health, education training, housing and healthy environment.

Regional organisations and the private sector should be encouraged to play an increasing role in the achievement of population objectives and to contribute to the implementation of population policies.

The Palestinian people should be enabled to recover their sovereignty over their natural resources so that they can not only formulate a population policy in keeping with its national interests and consistent with their development aspirations but also imple-

ment real development projects, bearing in mind their need for international protection, says the declaration.

Women, Population and Development

The declaration calls on the Arab States that have not yet ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against women are called upon to ratify that convention in a manner consistent with their domestic legislation. Efforts should be also made to develop legislation.

To improve the situation of women, particularly in regard to employment, social security, health insurance, pensions, maternity leave, appointments, job promotion opportunities and education, etc.

Ensure the contribution of Arab women in regard to work in the various societal activities, at all levels of administration and in all technical fields in order to promote equality between women and men and provide the conditions and services that are conducive to such contribution.

Increase the economic potential of women by providing them with opportunities for education, training, literacy programmes and employment in the various production sectors.

Promote the participation of women in public life at all levels, including decision making.

Arab and International Cooperation

In this regard, the declaration says that international cooperation within the framework of the United Nations system continue to provide technical and financial support for population activities to assist the Arab States in their efforts to achieve population and sustainable development goals.

Greenpeace has seen the future and it is oil-free

By Patricia Reaney
Reuters

LONDON — Greenpeace is no stranger to controversy and its latest goal — phasing out the global use of oil — is sure to stir up troubled waters.

For more than a decade the international environmentalist group protested against nuclear testing in the Pacific until France finally changed its policy after admitting it had blown up a Greenpeace flagship — Rainbow Warrior, in 1985.

Despite being told it was

"totally unrealistic", the group also helped achieve an international agreement in 1991 banning mining in Antarctica for a minimum of 50 years.

"We're now talking about an oil-free future as opposed to just raising the issue of global warming," said Australian Paul Gilding, the new executive director of Greenpeace International.

"Nuclear testing was the issue for the first 20 years of Greenpeace and I think oil will be for the next 20."

Mr. Gilding readily admits phasing out oil won't be easy and he sees it as an arena in which

Greenpeace will face some big battles.

"We won't take second best for a solution. We set our sights high and have proven that it could be very successful. No one every believed that the French would stop nuclear testing."

Greenpeace says phasing out oil and other fossil fuels, such as coal and natural gas, is necessary because they contribute to global warming and acid rain and because of the environmental damage from oil spills.

A study commissioned by Greenpeace called "Energy without oil" says other energy options

are already available and that such a transition would not bankrupt economies.

"It is technically and economically feasible to halve current global use of oil within 40 years," the report said, adding that oil and other fossil fuels could be phased out entirely over the next century.

It calls for improvements in energy efficiency, especially in transport and power, and replacing oil with biofuels derived from agricultural sources such as plants and hydrogen and electricity generating sources like solar and wind power.

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Agassi, Lendl upset in quarterfinals

BARCELONA (Agencies) — Americans Andre Agassi and Ivan Lendl, the top-two seeds in the \$875,000 Trofeo Conde de Godo tennis tournament, suffered straight-set upsets Friday and missed out on the semifinals.

Spain's Sergi Bruguera toppled favorite Agassi 6-3, 6-1 in the quarterfinal match, while 18-year-old Ukrainian Andrei Medvedev defeated second-seeded veteran Lendl 7-6 (7-5), 6-2.

Agassi the world's No. 7 going into the clay-court tournament, floundered at the baselines and fell prey to Bruguera's sharp passing shots when he moved up to the net.

"The truth is I played one of the best matches of my life," said Bruguera, who won groundstroke duel after groundstroke duel.

"Really it wasn't easy," he told Spanish National Television.

"It's just I played extraordinarily well the whole time."

Sergi was playing extremely well," Agassi said. "Every time he hit a big shot down the line it went in and every time I hit a big shot down the line it went out — but that's just the way things go."

Bruguera faces unseeded Swede Magnus Gustafsson in the semifinals.

Gustafsson bested Russian Yevgeny Kafelnikov, 6-4, 6-3 earlier in the day.

Medvedev, seeded ninth in the tournament and ranked 19th in the world, is one of the hottest clay-court players on the circuit. He won three tournaments on clay last year and last week notched a victory in Estoril, Portugal.

"It was something special for me because Ivan is a player who has made history in tennis, winning so many Grand Slam titles and especially continuing to be in the top 10 at 33 years of age."

Medvedev said. "Before the match I felt like a kid before the big man and this did not allow me to relax and play my game."

In the semifinals, Medvedev will face the world's No. 15,



American Andre Agassi returns a ball during his match at the Conde de Godo tennis tournament (AFP photo)

Thomas Muster of Austria, who defeated Dutchman Richard Krajicek 6-4, 3-6, 6-3.

Date captures Japan Open: Pete Sampras, playing his first match as the world's top-ranked player, Saturday advanced into the singles finals along with Brad Gilbert in the Japan Open tennis tournament.

Top-seeded Kimiko Date captured the women's singles title for the second straight year, beating eighth-seeded Stephanie Rottier of Holland 6-1, 6-3 on the hard court of Ariake Coliseum.

Date received \$27,000 while Rottier, No. 43, \$13,500.

"As you know the atmosphere of the final match is something special particularly it depends on my second title. I was thinking about it during the match. I made good concentration in the first set but it was not in the second set," said Date, ranked 19th in the world.

In the men's singles semifinals, second-seeded Sampras posted a 6-4, 6-2 triumph over sixth-seeded Wally Masur of Australia.

Seventh-seeded American

Brad Gilbert outlasted fifth-seeded Henrik Holm of Sweden 6-1, 3-6, 6-3.

Sampras became the world's top-ranked men's tennis player Friday when he beat David Wheaton 6-3, 3-6, 6-4 in the quarterfinals, unseating Jim Courier.

Coetzer beats Capriati: Amanda Coetzer of South Africa beat third-seeded Jennifer Capriati 6-2, 1-6, 6-4 Friday in the quarterfinals of the \$375,000 Bausch Lomb championships.

Third seeded Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain ended unseeded Shaun Stafford's string of upsets in the quarterfinals with a 6-2, 6-4 decision.

Second-seeded Gabriela Sabatini, who plays Coetzer in the semifinals, dominated eighth-seeded Leila Meskhi of Georgia 6-1, 6-0 in another quarterfinal.

The quarterfinal between fourth-seeded Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere of Switzerland and sixth-seeded Natalia Zvereva of Belarus was cancelled because of rain.

Senna captures provisional pole

DONINGTON PARK, England (R) — Brazilian Ayrton Senna displayed his usual mastery of wet conditions Friday when he gained provisional pole position for Sunday's European Grand Prix.

A series of minor accidents marked the opening qualifying session as drivers battled to cope with the persistent drizzle and wet track.

Senna, driving a McLaren, recorded the fastest time of one minute 23.976 seconds and was one-tenth of a second clear of Briton Damon Hill in the leading Williams.



Brazilian Ayrton Senna wearing his protection mask at the practice session prior to the European GP (AFP photo)



French driver Alain Prost addresses Williams-Renault technicians during the first session of qualifying practice for Sunday's European Formula One Grand Prix (AFP photo)

Hill's more experienced team mate Frenchman Alain Prost was third quickest in 1:24.467, finishing ahead of Finland's J.J. Lehto in a Sauber and Frenchman Jean Alesi and Austrian Gerhard Berger in Ferraris.

German Michael Schumacher, who finished seventh fastest suffered an early setback when his Benetton slid into the wall at the Melbourne hairpin.

Briton Martin Brundle, in a Ligier, and Frenchman Erik Comas, in a Larrousse, also went off the track.

Brundle later collided with Luca Badoer's Lola-Ferrari in the closing stages.

High banks of spray continuously reared up from the track to prevent any truly representative driving.

The 4,023-km Donington Park Circuit is being used for a Grand Prix for the first time since 1938.

Hill was another driver to show that he can rise to the challenge of wet conditions.

The rain related briefly mid-way through the session but the track became very crowded as drivers tried to take advantage of the improved conditions.

The situation was aggravated by the new rule limiting each driver to a maximum of 12 laps in a qualifying session, wet or dry.

"This is ridiculous," said Italian Riccardo Patrese, a Benetton driver. "It makes it almost impossible in these conditions."

Senna said: "It is the first time we have tried the car in the wet with the right tyres and we pushed hard this afternoon when it was wet."

"The Williams' still got very close, but in the morning, when it was even wetter and when power was less important, the time differential was more in our favour."

"The rain is good for us. It makes it very slippery and erodes the power advantage of the others."

Norwich's hopes evaporate

LONDON (AP) — Norwich's Premier League title hopes virtually disappeared Friday with a 5-1 loss to Tottenham in driving rain at White Hart Lane.

Norwich needed a victory to move back on top of the standings, but the club's second defeat in a week left it trailing Aston Villa by two points and Manchester United by one.

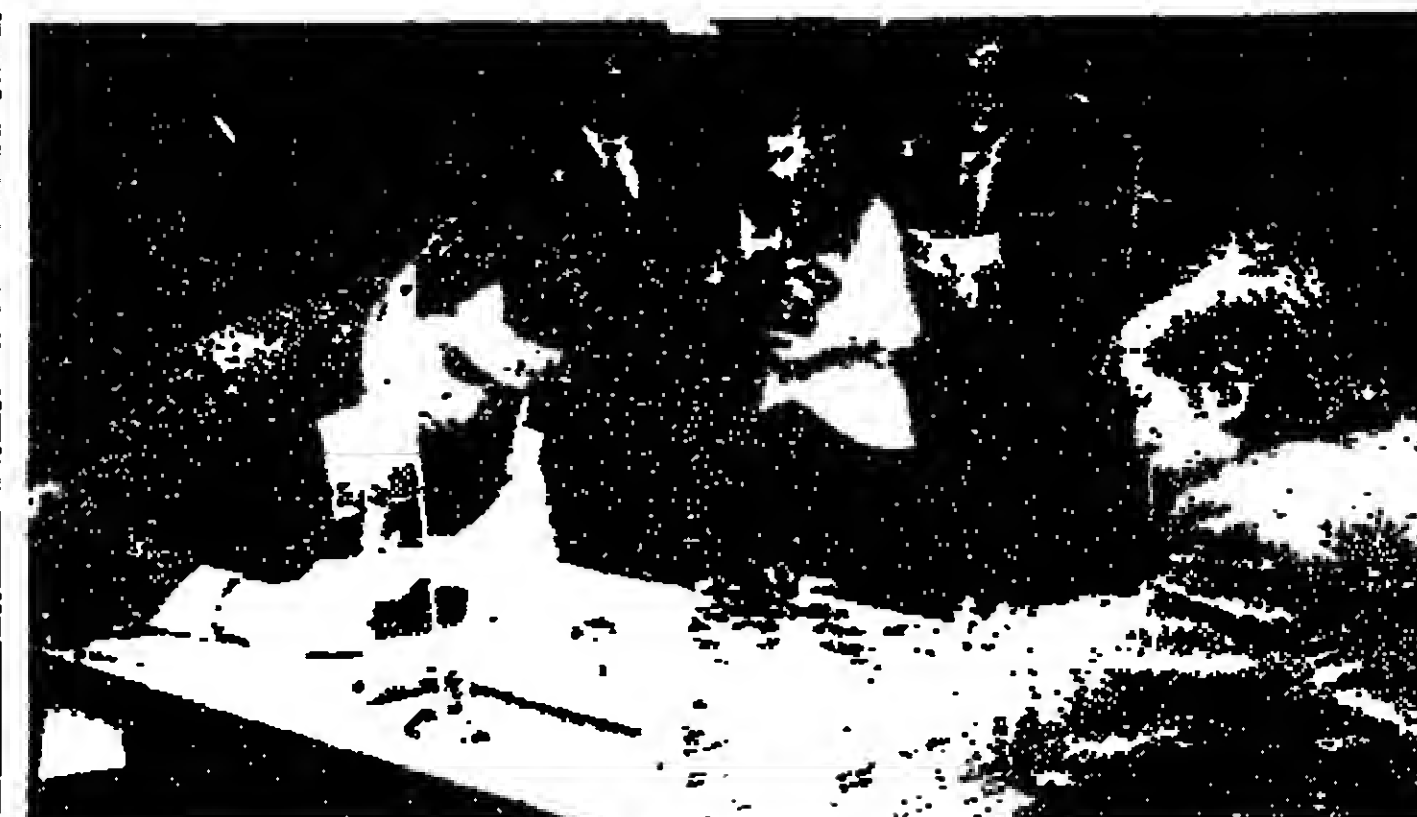
In addition, Norwich has played two matches more than the two other title contenders.

Tottenham got two goals from Teddy Sheringham, who has 25 for the season, and one each from Neil Ruddock, Nicky Barry and Nayim.

Norwich's only goal came in the 86th minute, from Efan Ekoku.

Norwich now has 65 points in 38 games. First-place Villa, with 67 points in 36 games, plays at home Saturday against Coventry.

Manchester United, with 66 points in 36 games, hosts Sheffield Wednesday on Saturday.



World chess champion Garry Kasparov (left) takes down a move as he is watched by his predecessor Anatoli Karpov during their match at the Linares Tournament last month (AFP photo)

Chess is facing chaos

BRUSSELS (AP) — Order and logic may reign at the chessboard, but wrangling and chaos are swirling around the game.

Rival world championships, rival federations, big egos and prize money disputes are splitting the chess world.

"I don't know whether we have a world champion any more," said Visuvanathan Anand, the acting president of the Grandmaster's Association.

The organization has brought the top players together during the last six years and given them some independence from the World Chess Federation, known by the French acronym FIDE. But now, the Grandmasters' Association is also coming apart at the seams.

General Manager Pierrette Broodthaers announced her resignation, saying she was tired of the scheming of some players, including world champion Garry Kasparov.

On Feb. 26 Kasparov and his British challenger Nigel Short decided to set up their own world title match and invited bids, sidestepping both the FIDE and the Grandmaster's Association.

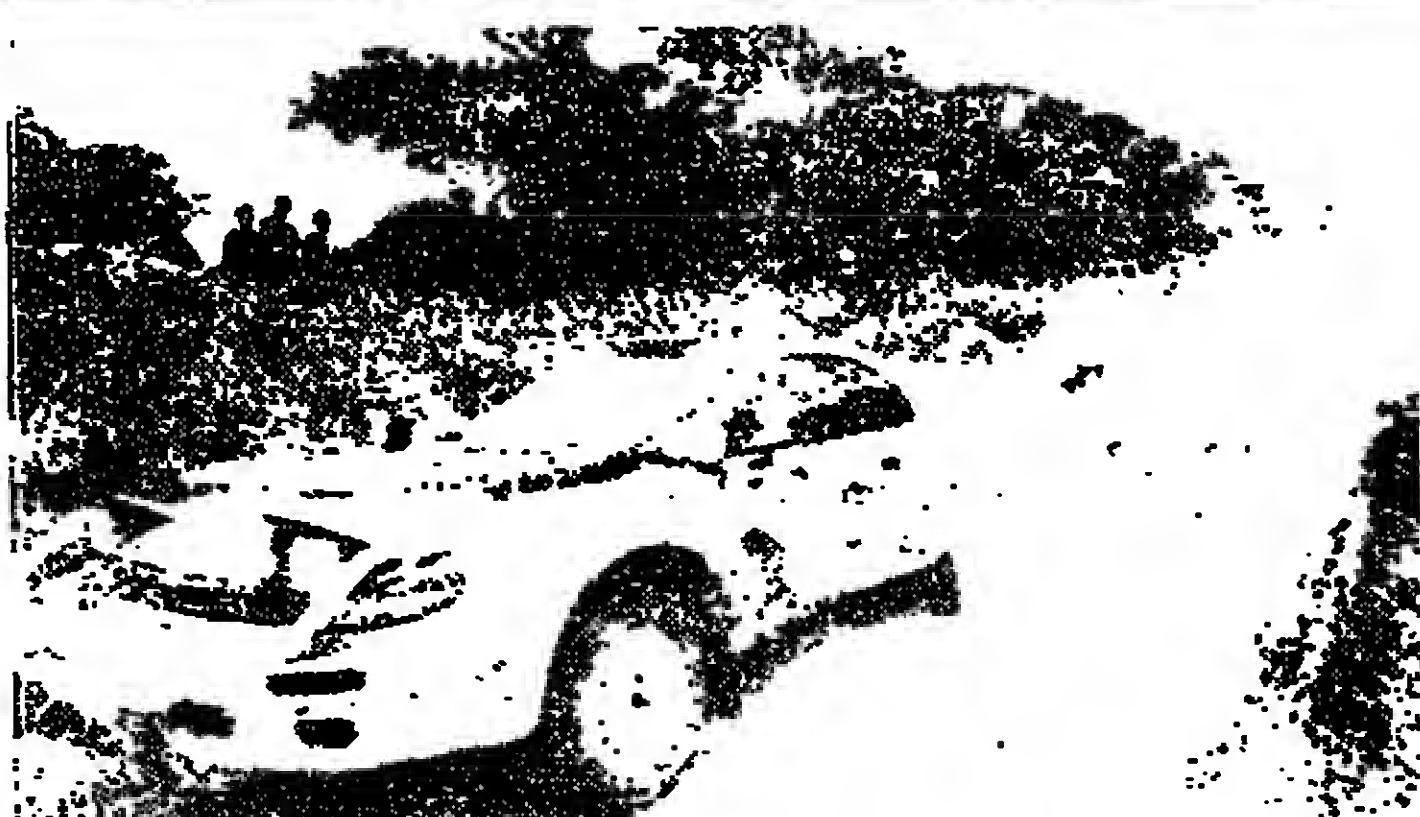
Kankkunen consolidates lead

NAIROBI (R) — Finn-Juha Kankkunen and the Toyota Castrol team consolidated their lead in the Kenya Safari Rally Saturday after their lone challenger, Japanese Kenjiro Shinozuka in a Mitsubishi, retired with engine trouble.

Kankkunen, 34, driving a Toyota Celica 4wd, headed the standings after 426.9 km of the 1,094.45 km third leg. He had lost 50 minutes.

Toyota Celica 4wds held the first four places, with Finn Markku Alen in second position nine minutes behind Kankkunen.

Kenyan Ian Duncan, slowed by cylinder gasket trouble, was third with a penalty time of two hours and Japan's Yasuhiro Iwase was fourth after losing two hours 12 minutes.



Markku Alen of Finland drives his Toyota Celica Turbo 4wd in the first leg of Kenya's Safari Rally (AFP photo)

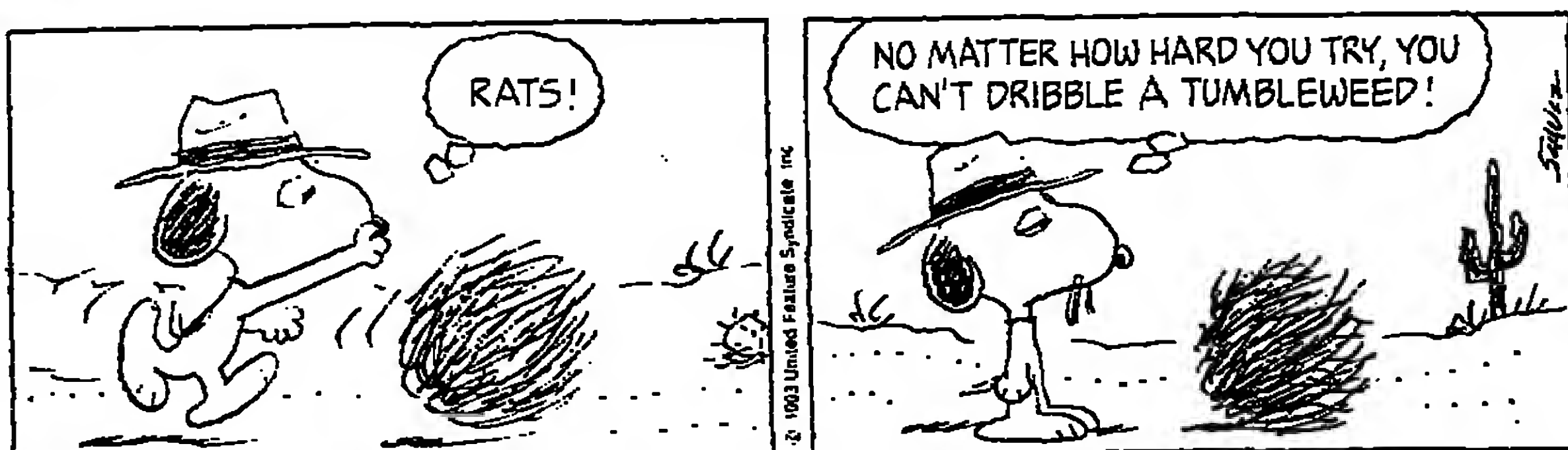
"I have been driving so softly the car has not even bottomed, but this rally is hard," Kankkunen said.

"We want to go steady and hold on to the lead. If we top this leg we are on our way to a win and leadership of World Championship standings."

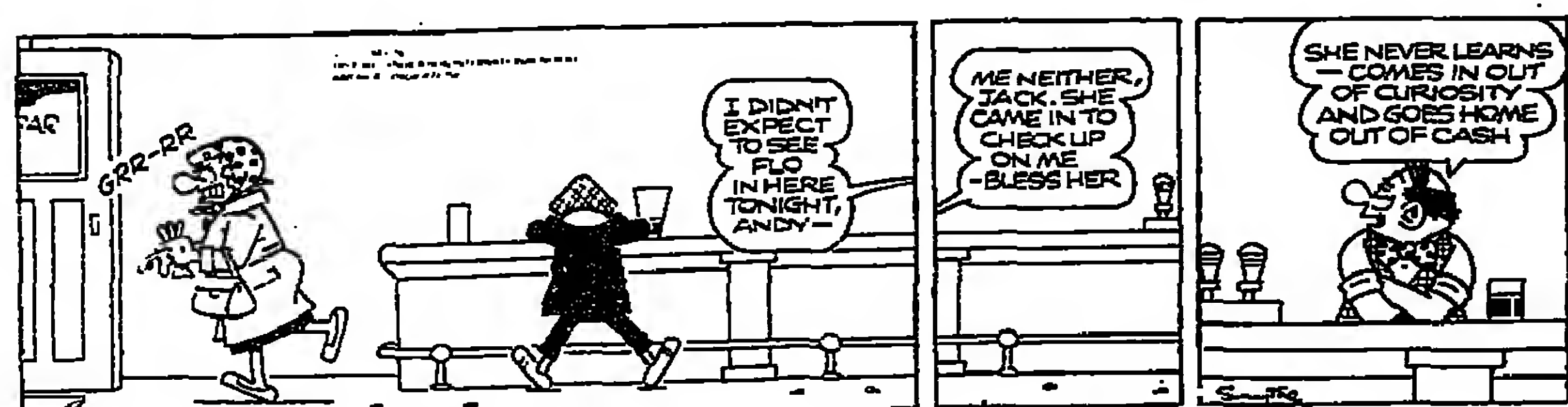
"We are not going to be careless or just relax because the Toyota are in the lead. We intend to consolidate our team chances so there is no question over who wins the manufacturer's prize."

Kankkunen is third in the world championship standings after the Monte Carlo, Swedish and Portuguese rallies.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY APRIL 11, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Efforts on your part to improve relations seem futile this Easter Sunday as the evening brings tension and strain and everyone seems to be in an argumentative mood. Avoid doing anything rash.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You need to have a whole fresh new approach to whatever your assets and liabilities happen to be if you are to realize them to their best potential.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) New or important friends can be the best means by which you can advance forward in gaining the various personal things that you want the most.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) A bigwig will give you some confidential information that will put you on the right track for making some very worthwhile dreams come true soon.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Persons who like you and have made a big success of their lives are standing in the wings waiting to help you to gain your longings.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Get a highly placed expert to let you in on what can best be done in order to put your practical, deep-seated desires on a satisfactory basis.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You would be wise now to use

the expertise of a understanding partner if you wish to make rapid strides towards a new ambition that intrigues you.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) If you have some frustration that you need to do something about, look directly at it today and you see ways by which to turn it to your advantage.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) A charmer can be the one to reconcile any differences in a standpoint between you and an associate that could otherwise cause a possible rift.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Some activity in which you are prominently engaged needs the cooperation of a member of your family if it is to come to a full fruition.

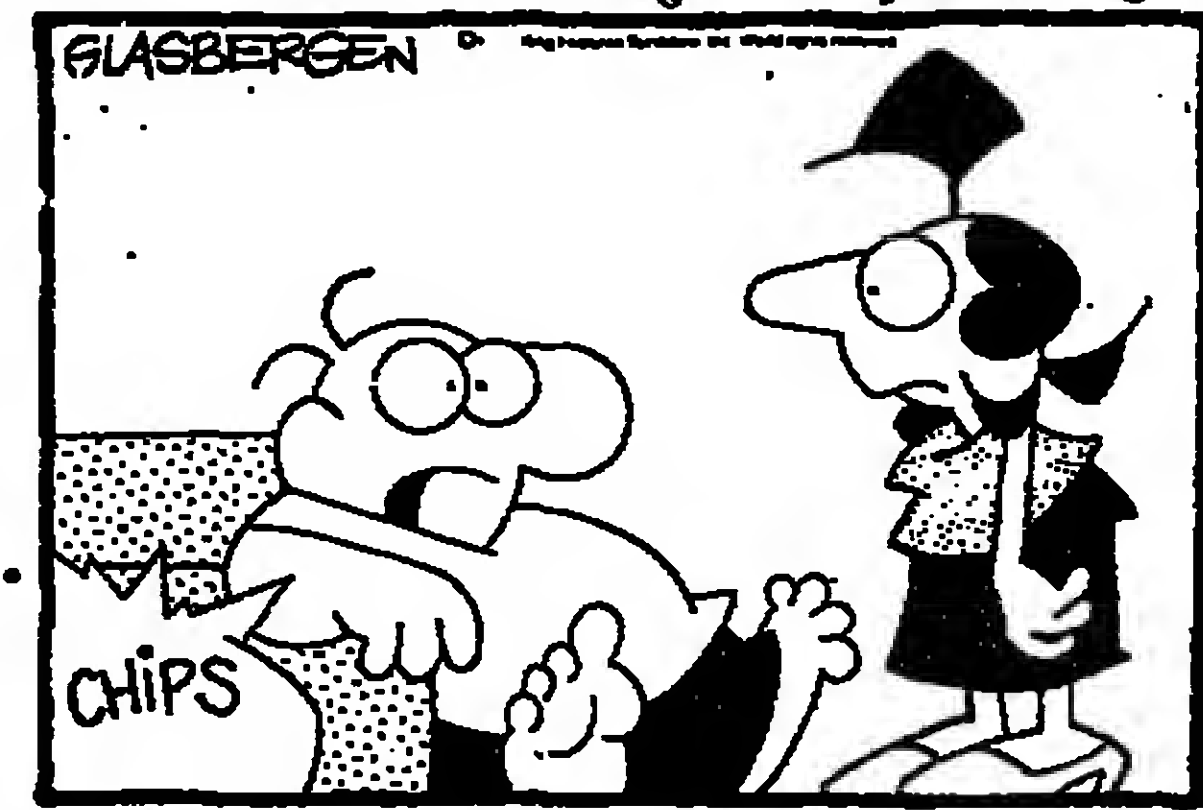
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) If you are to enjoy yourself to the utmost and make the most headway now it is necessary that you go to the world where you can find it.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Gain the goodwill of members of your family now by letting them know you realize their practical and material needs will help them to obtain them.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Your judgment is correct in realizing the benefits that can be yours by having more acquaintances and allies helping you in the public eye to advance.

THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen



"I'm in such a deep rut... I think I burned my feet on the Earth's core!"

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

CAPEN

CUPAN

TORETT

JOACLE



WHAT AN OFF-COLOR STORY MIGHT MAKE SOME PEOPLE DO.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: GIRON BRAVO FUMBLE JOYFUL

Answer: A fine how-do-you-do for a tourist in Paris! — "BON JOUR"

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMAR HIRSCH
Training Media Services, Inc.

ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
#QJ8 ♠AKQ72 ♠K973 ♠9
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
Pass Pass 1/2 Pass
1 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?

A.—While we raise partner's major-suit response freely with three-card support, this hand requires a different approach. You are too strong for a mere spade raise, but lack of a fourth spade bars you from even considering a jump raise. Start painting a picture of your distribution by bidding two diamonds, intending to raise spades next.

Q.2—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
#AK76 ♠J4 ♠1042 ♠J643
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
Pass Pass 1/2 Pass
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass ?
What action do you take?

A.—The only two calls that come into consideration are a pass and two hearts. Since partner surely has at least five hearts and could have six, we prefer the correction to two hearts.

Q.3—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
#AKP ♠void ♠AJ97 ♠AKQ102
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ 1/2 Pass 4/2
What action do you take?

A.—You have a tremendously powerful hand, but to unilaterally choose a suit to bid has two disadvantages: First, it could result in missing your best strain; secondly, it might be right to punish the opponents. You can avoid this problem by doubling. Since partner has not bid, this is for takeout. Of course, North is free to convert for

penalties.

Q.4—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
#void ♠97 ♠AQJ5 ♠AKJ10654
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
Pass Pass ?
What do you bid now?

A.—This could be your hand, or it might belong to the opponents in a major. One thing is almost sure. Since partner did not open, there's little hope for slam. We would open five clubs in an effort to shut out the opponents. You don't need much from partner to make it.

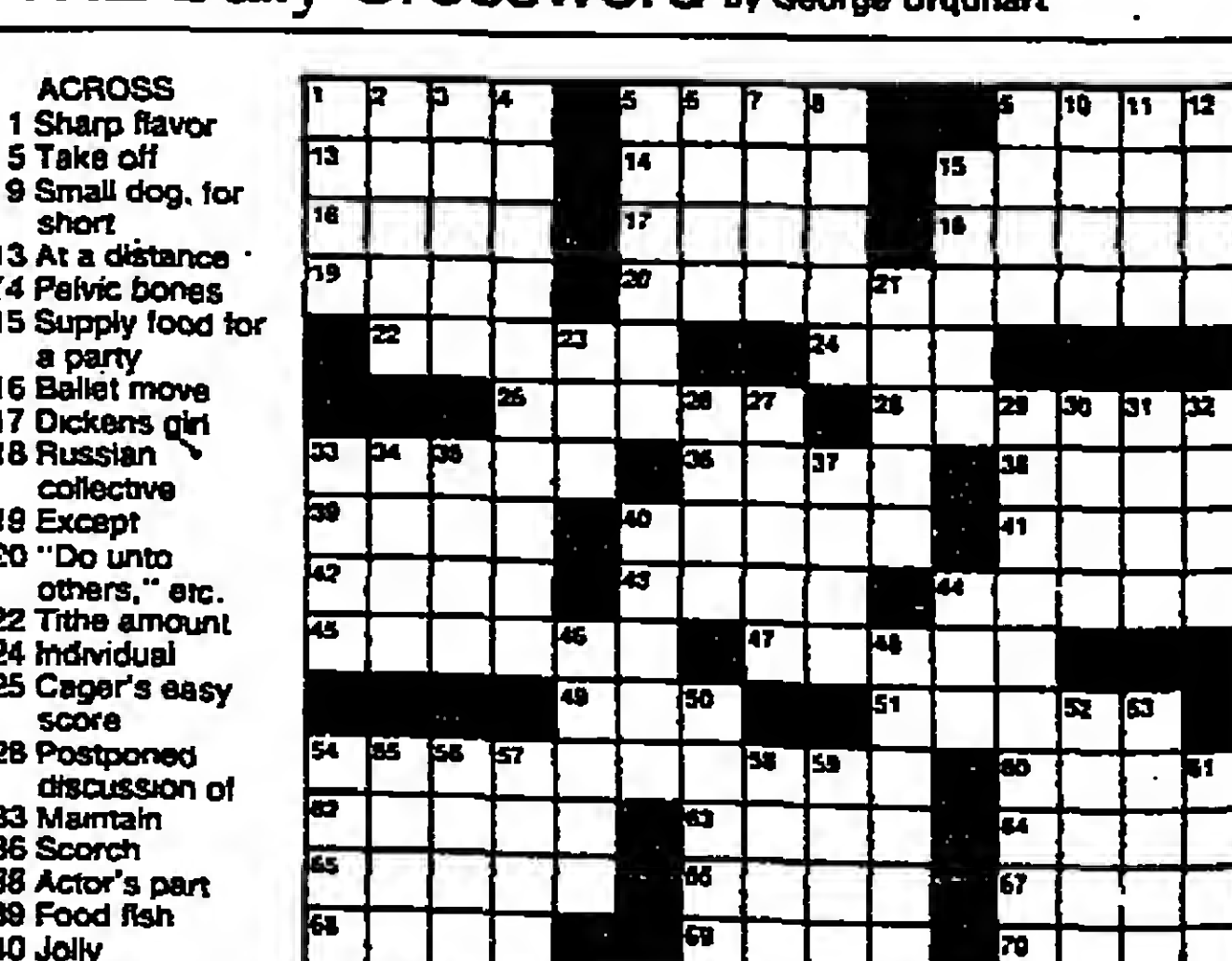
Q.5—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
#743 ♠AKJ643 ♠A ♠AK4
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?

A.—At the very least you want to be in game, but where? Either hearts, spades or no trump could be right. Best is to make a temporizing jump shift to three clubs. Should partner raise, you will naturally return to hearts.

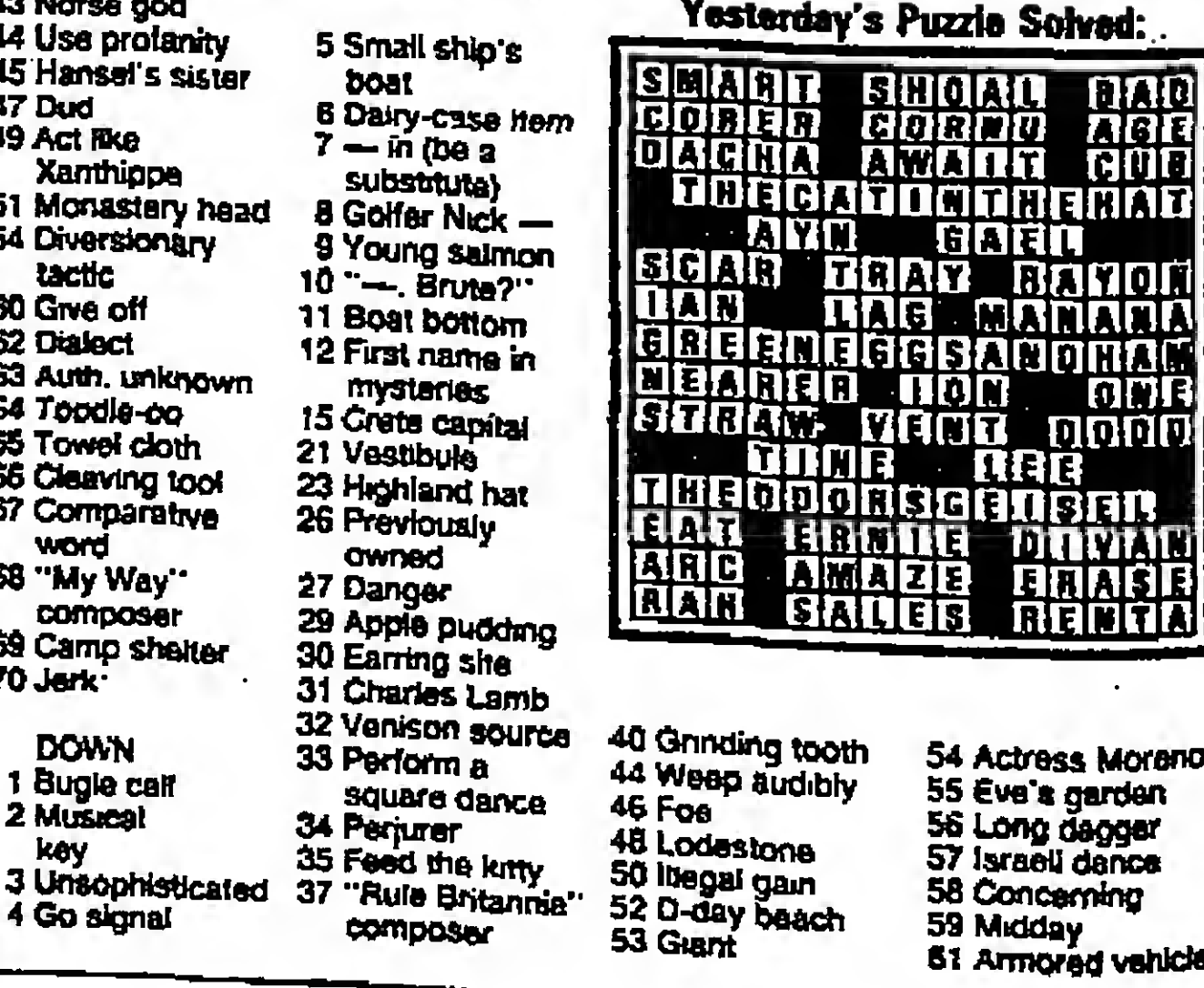
Q.6—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
#4 ♠AKJ986 ♠KQ1092 ♠A
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?

A.—Great things could be in store if you can find a fit. However, you might need a lot of room to determine exactly where to play the contract. For the moment, you need no more than bid three diamonds. That's forcing and, should partner take a preference to hearts or rebid no trump, you can complete the description of your distribution by rebidding four diamonds.

THE Daily Crossword by George Urquhart



Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close	Today's Close
Sterling Pound	1.5270	1.5275
Deutsche Mark	1.6050	1.6060
Swiss Franc	1.4760	1.4765
French Franc	5.4760	5.4615 **
Japanese Yen	113.35	113.35
European Currency Unit	1.2133	1.2041 **

European Interest Rates Date: 4/11/1993

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.18	3.12	3.18	3.43
Sterling Pound	5.75	5.75	5.75	5.75
Deutsche Mark	8.00	1.68	7.57	6.68
Swiss Franc	5.12	4.93	4.75	4.43
French Franc	9.57	8.87	8.45	7.87
Japanese Yen	3.21	3.21	3.25	5.31
European Currency Unit	4.06	8.87	8.45	7.87

Precious Metals Date: 4/11/1993

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	557.65	0.65	Silver	3.33	0.09

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 10/4/1993

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6660	0.6580
Sterling Pound	1.0471	1.0524
Deutsche Mark	0.4271	0.4292
Swiss Franc	0.4647	0.4665
French Franc	0.1268	0.1268
Japanese Yen	0.6057	0.6067
Dutch Guilder	0.3802	0.3821
Swedish Krona	0.0901	0.0906
Italian Lira	0.0457	0.0459
Belgian Franc	0.02071	0.02081

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	7/1/1993	Close	31/3/1993	Close
All-Share	194.96		196.11	
Banking Sector	151.80		155.37	
Insurance Sector	214.47		215.78	
Industry Sector	178.45		274.57	
Services Sector	217.51		266.16	

Other Currencies Date: 10/4/1993

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8010	1.8000
Lebanese Lira	0.03655	0.04055
Saudi Riyal	0.1876	0.1841
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.7300	2.7200
Qatari Riyal	0.1859	0.1880
Egyptian Pound	0.1950	0.2180
Omani Riyal	1.7120	1.7800
UAE Dirham	0.1859	0.1880
Greek Dracmas	0.3095	0.3295
Cypriot Pound	1.4130	1.4330

Cyprus promotes tourism

MRS. PHYRNE MICHAEL, Director General of the Cyprus Tourism Organisation, stated to a group of journalists: "I would like to assure our friends in the Arab World that for us, tourism is not merely numbers. Our ambition is to offer to every tourist who comes to Cyprus all facilities so that he can enjoy his holidays to the maximum possible degree and thus leave our island a happier and more relaxed human being."

Today Cyprus is still a special place, despite its small size it offers a unique variety of scenery, from golden sandy beaches to green pine-clad forests rich in rare species of plants which reach altitude of more than 6,000 feet.

Cyprus has got excellent hotels and first class hotel apartments and the standard of service is of the highest level. All Cyprus hotels and hotel apartments are very well furnished and very well equipped. All of them provide excellent international communication facilities.

The food in the hotels and restaurants is delicious and the Cyprus cuisine is renowned for its high standard and good taste.

"Last but not least," Mrs. Michael says, "I must underline the most dominant and important attraction of Cyprus as a holiday destination. Our people and Cyprus hospitality which is unparalleled and cannot be easily matched by any other country."

"Cyprus has been called the 'Island of Love and Beauty' and is very much so," she points out.



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Yugoslavia devalues dinar

BELGRADE (R) — The Yugoslav government devalued the dinar by 98.4 per cent Friday to try to combat an economic crash caused by nearly two years of war and almost a year of U.N. economic sanctions.

The government said the official exchange rate from midnight Friday would be 48,000 dinars to one dollar, compared with 750 dinars to the dollar on Friday morning.

The devaluation, recommended by the National Bank of Yugoslavia, was the fifth in 13 months.

It brought the official rate, used for accounting imports and exports and in setting the daily inter-bank rate, almost exactly to the level of Belgrade's flourishing currency black market.

The government also limited the amount of foreign currency which private Yugoslav citizens can take out of the country at one time to 1,000 marks (about \$620).

"The federal government is committed to halting the slump in industrial production and to curbing rising prices," Deputy Prime Minister Jovan Zebic told the Yugoslav Economic Council, a watchdog body of economic experts.

"The lack of foreign currency is causing major problems which have to be followed by additional measures," Mr. Zebic said in comments carried by Tanjug news agency.

Tanjug said the official exchange rate would now be allowed to change by no more than two per cent each day.

The economy of Yugoslavia, now comprising only Serbia and Montenegro, has crashed since ethnic fighting erupted in the former Yugoslav republic of Croatia in June 1991 and then spread to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

United Nations sanctions, an oil embargo and the financing of the budget by printing money have hastened the decline.

Economists say the decline is so great that even such a big devaluation is unlikely to halt the slide. Previous devaluations, the last of which was last November, failed to turn round the economy.

Kenya seeks tourists

NAIROBI (R) — Kenya, where crime and political unrest have caused tourism revenues to plummet, plans to fight back to revitalise its main money earner, a government official has said.

Philemon Mwasaka, permanent secretary in the ministry of tourism, said income from the country's top hard currency earner plunged to \$295 million in 1992 from \$400 million in 1991. He blamed the sharp downturn in visits to Safari parks or Indian Ocean beaches on reports in Western countries, where most visitors come from, about attacks on tourists, tribal violence and political unrest.

"Imagined insecurity in Kenya has convinced European-based tourists that the country was not safe," he told Reuters in an interview.

The run-up to December's first multi-party polls in 26 years was marred by tribal violence. This, coupled with bandit attacks on tourists, led to a fall in hotel bookings of up to 60,000 bednights in the last five months of 1992, tourism officials say. Last year, some 700,000 tourists visited Kenya after a record 814,000 in 1991. But many, enticed by cheap bucket-shop deals, kept their wallets closed while in the country.

Mr. Mwasaka said the government was fighting back with a vigorous campaign to revitalise the industry and woo visitors.

Yeltsin bans petrol price increase

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin, facing a crucial test of his popularity this month, said Friday he was reversing official moves to double petrol prices.

"In fact there was a misunderstanding. It is impermissible," Mr. Yeltsin told newspaper editors at a meeting in the Kremlin.

"It will ban it by decree today, and those responsible will be sacked," he said in the televised session, adding that petrol prices should be raised only gradually in the second half of the year.

Moscow officials introduced new prices of 70 roubles a litre (about 50 cents per gallon) for low-octane petrol Wednesday.

They said the move followed naturally from a gradual reduction in state subsidies of oil prices under the government's free market programme.

The unpopular step raised fears of new rises in the cost of public transport, heating and other services.

"We wonder: How many votes will this cost Yeltsin in the April 25 referendum?" a Moscow newspaper said.

Voters will be asked a series of questions at the plebiscite, including whether they trust Mr. Yeltsin and support the painful reform programme.

The president hopes a strong show of popular support will strengthen his hand in a struggle against the conservative top legislature.

But in Russia the price is measured against rampant inflation, which has eroded purchasing power, and an average monthly salary of 13,000 roubles (just over \$18) in January.

Kuwait names new chairman to control investments

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait has appointed a new chairman of the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) as part of a reshuffle of its scandal-hit overseas finance empire.

Finance ministry officials said Finance Minister Nasser Abdulla Al Rodhan appointed Ali Rashid Al Badr last week and gave him overall control of the London-based Kuwait Investment Office (KIO).

The officials quoted the ministerial decree as saying the measure was "considered as the first step in merging KIO and KIA."

Sheikh Badr was previously KIO president.

The officials said a new KIO manager, who has not been named yet, would report to Sheikh Badr.

Sheikh Rodhan appointed Sheikh Badr after the approval of the KIA's new nine-member board.

Sheikh Rodhan said at the end of March that he had proposed Sheikh Badr to replace KIA chairman Abdullah Al Gabandi as part of widely expected reforms.

Kuwait's multi-billion-dollar investment empire has shrunk in recent years because of Gulf war costs and alleged mismanagement.

The KIO, worth more than \$100 billion before the Gulf war, has been hit by scandals and is subject to increasingly close parliamentary scrutiny. Economists put its current worth at anything between \$15 and \$40 billion.

The KIA was set up in 1984 to monitor the performance of KIO and other investment institutions, but some critics said the move did not bring KIO under sufficient control.

The current management of KIO in January sued seven former executives of KIO and its Spanish holding company, Grupo Torres, saying the seven had committed fraud and other crimes that led to losses of more than \$1 billion.

KIO says in all \$5 billion in investments was lost in Spain.

Sheikh Rodhan, the oil minister, the central bank governor and the finance ministry under-secretary serve on the KIA board.

An Emir decree named Sheikh Badr and four new board members, Abdul Mohsen Al Mukhalzim, Barak Khaled Al Marzuqi, Abdul Rasoul Youssef Abu Al Hassan, and Abdul Latif Al Hamad.

None of them had served on the KIA board before.

Sheikh Mukhalzim is general manager of the Kuwait Finance House, Kuwait's only Islamic bank.

Private investment in Syria surges

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria has attracted more than \$2 billion in capital from Syrian and foreign investors under a law introduced nearly two years ago to encourage development of the private sector, a government official has said.

Investments of 90 billion Syrian pounds (\$2.1 billion) in 700 manufacturing, transportation and agricultural projects had created more than 55,000 jobs, said Mohammad Zuhair Taghlibi.

Mr. Taghlibi, head of the investment department reporting to the prime minister in his capacity as chairman of the Higher Investment Authority, told Reuters 150 other projects were under discussion and expected to be approved soon.

Law 10's incentives had made the climate for private investment in Syria better than ever, but Mr. Taghlibi acknowledged problems with the country's infrastructure and foreign exchange system might have discouraged potential investors.

He said the government was well on the way to solving these by approving electricity projects aimed at disruption-free service, building a modern telephone network, and choosing sites for major industrial zones near the biggest Syrian cities.

Mr. Taghlibi said manufacturing — particularly food products, textiles and chemicals — drew the lion's share of the new capital, with 46 billion Syrian pounds going into 204 projects.

More than 40 billion pounds went into the transportation sector, including air travel, shipping, railways and buses.

Projects under study involved the oil industry, including the purchase of oil tankers to ship Syrian crude. Syria exports around 300,000 barrels per day (b/d) of its total production of over 500,000 b/d of crude oil.

The incentives of law 10, which took force in June 1991, include exemption from income tax for up to seven years, lifting of restrictions on imports including cars and other vehicles, and waiving of customs duty and tax on their imports.

Investors are able to open foreign-currency accounts at local banks and benefit from a special exchange rate of 42 pounds to dollar, compared to the official rate of 11.2 and a black-market rate that ranges between 45 and 52 to the dollar.

Studies were under way on a unified exchange rate for the pound and this could be achieved soon, Mr. Taghlibi said.

"We are aspiring for a unified rate. We are trying to introduce this rate gradually to limit any negative effects on the pound," he said.

The Syrian central bank guarantees the transfer abroad of profits in hard currency. Syria has also joined the Kuwait-based Arab Institution for Guaranteeing Investment.

Mr. Taghlibi said an investment bank would be established soon and consideration was being given to formation of a stock market to deal in shares of the new private companies.

The economy ministry prepared a stock market study which is under discussion in the cabinet. No details of the study have been released.

British firms seek Gulf export orders

DUBAI (R) — British exporters, 1992.

The export figures, compiled by Britain's Department of Trade and Industry, are based on an exchange rate of \$1.75 to the pound in 1991 and 1992.

With sterling down to around \$1.50, British producers who were priced out of the export market by the high value of the pound feel their goods are now more competitive.

Exports to Iran stood at \$568 million (\$996 million), despite poor political relations over an Iranian death sentence passed on British author Salman Rushdie for blaspheming Islam.

Iraq, a major trading partner in the 1980s, accounted for \$34 million (\$60 million) of exports in 1992. Iraq was barred from importing all but a few essential food and medicine supplies by U.N. sanctions after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

In the UAE, despite a growth in exports of 20 per cent in the last year, officials say British exporters slipped to fifth behind leading exporters Japan, China, France, and the United States.

But diplomats stress the significance of invisible earnings from consultancy, banking and insurance, sectors of traditional British strength which do not figure in the statistics.

Britain's Trade Minister Richard Needham will attend the exhibition which opens Tuesday.

Exports to Saudi Arabia stood at \$1.97 billion (\$3.46 billion) last year, down 12 per cent from 1991, but more than double the next highest Gulf importer, the United Arab Emirates, which took \$927 million (\$1.63 billion) of goods.

Total exports to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Iran and Iraq totalled \$4.18 billion (\$7.51 billion) in 1992.

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Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema **CONCORD** Tel.: 677420

Macaulay Culkin **HOME ALONE 2**

"LOST IN NEW YORK"

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema **PLAZA** Tel.: 699238

Nabilah Obeid...in **TOOT...TOOT**

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

Nabil & Hisham's **AHLAN THEATRE** Tel.: 625155

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On Thursday at 5 p.m. and 9 p.m.

On Friday at 9:00 p.m.

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Definitely Democracy (Demokratiyya Wa Nuss)

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Nabil Al Mashini Theatre

Indian army deployed in Kashmir; curfew clamped

SRINAGAR, India (R) — At least seven people were killed when a major battle erupted between Muslim rebels and security forces in the summer capital of Indian-ruled Kashmir Saturday, witnesses and government officials said.

Domestic news agencies said an indefinite curfew had been clamped on the entire Srinagar district and the army has been called out.

At least 50 houses and 200 shops were ablaze in the centre of Srinagar, the summer capital of Kashmir, and there was a fierce exchange of gunfire between the two sides, a Kashmir state government spokesman said in New Delhi.

He said at least seven people were killed.

The shooting began after some 30,000 people, yelling "Indian go home" and "we want freedom," filled Lal Chowk, a square in the centre of the city, to protest against the alleged killing of civilians in an upsurge of violence in the Kashmir Valley over the past week.

The angry mob set fire to a four-storey building housing troops and demolished sandbag bunkers used by security forces. The spokesman said the building and bunkers were evacuated before militants took them over.

The fire spread to neighbouring buildings and security forces opened fire at some people they thought were responsible, said the government official, who is

attached to the Kashmir state government.

Witnesses saw at least two people lying dead or wounded on a road in the square, and said they feared there were many more casualties. A convoy of trucks carrying paramilitary police and army troops was seen speeding to the site.

Around 10,000 people have died since tensions in Muslim-dominated Kashmir erupted into open revolt against predominantly Hindu India in January 1990. Srinagar has been tense since the murder of a noted human rights activist and his son-in-law last week.

Tensions were further stoked after a top guerrilla leader was killed Friday. At least 70 people have been killed in Kashmir over the past four days. Residents say they include 20 young men killed in police custody and many other civilians.

Police say the dead include at least 17 paramilitary policemen killed in clashes with the militants.

The militant leader, Muhammad Maqbool Durrani, second-in-command of the pro-Pakistan Hezb-ul-Mujahideen, and three companions were killed in a clash Friday, police said.

A spokesman for the Hezb-ul-Mujahideen — considered the strongest of the many groups battling tens of thousands of Indian security forces — said the group had declared two days of mourning and called a general

strike in the valley.

Mr. Durrani's death is considered a major setback to the separatist campaign.

"During the last few days there has been a stepping-up of violence with militants throwing grenades at police," said the state government spokesman in New Delhi. "The result is that civilians are being killed."

He blamed the violence on clashes between the Hezb and the pro-independence Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF).

The government says a JKLF sympathiser and noted heart surgeon, Abdul Ahad Guru, was murdered by the Hezb 10 days ago. Militants say he was killed by troops.

The spokesman also linked the violence to India's efforts to begin a political process in Kashmir, which has been under the direct rule of a Delhi-appointed governor for three years.

He said Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao was likely to hold talks on Kashmir with his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif in Dhaka this weekend at a summit of South Asian leaders.

India has fought three wars with Pakistan — two of them over Kashmir — since both became independent of Britain in 1947. It accuses Islamabad, which controls one-third of Kashmir, of arming and training the militants.

Pakistan says it provides only political and diplomatic support to the anti-Indian militants.



Chris Hani

S. African leader slain

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Black South African Communist Party leader Chris Hani was shot dead Saturday and police said a white man had been arrested. Police spokesman Burger Van Rooyen said Mr. Hani, general secretary of the South African Communist Party (SACP) and a senior member of the allied African National Congress, was hit by four bullets at his home in suburban Johannesburg.

He did not identify the arrested man.

Mr. Hani, 50, was commander-in-chief of the ANC armed wing for many years. Right-wing whites regarded him as one of their worst enemies.

Law and Order Ministry spokesman Craig Kotze confirmed police were holding a 40-year suspect who was being questioned "very intensely."

He appealed to people to be calm and cool-headed.

"We strongly warn against anyone taking the law into their own hands or attempting to make revenge attacks," he added.

He said the killing of Mr. Hani was particularly tragic in the light of recent progress in all-race negotiations for a post-apartheid democracy.

Mr. Hani, a Latin scholar and devotee of the romantic poets, was a strong advocate of peaceful negotiations despite harbouring a deep dislike of the country's white minority rulers.

Mr. Hani's neighbours in Boksburg suburb — close to the peace conference site by the Johannesburg International Airport — said he was shot between 10.00 and 10.15 a.m.

Initial reports said he was hit in the head four times and was dead by the time an ambulance arrived.

He lay in his front garden, still clutching a morning newspaper.

Communist Party Chairman Joe Slovo, saying he was "shocked and shaken," said South Africa could ill afford to lose Hani just as protracted democracy negotiations appeared to be close to breakthrough.

"It's clearly designed to spike the whole process once again," he told reporters.

Talks have been plagued by violence in black townships, mainly between supporters of Nelson Mandela's ANC and the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party.

But the ANC alliance and others long have accused shadowy white elements of fomenting unrest in a rearguard action to preserve apartheid and minority supremacy.

Mr. Hani's death deals a major blow to the ANC-led alliance.

He was widely regarded as a possible heir to Mr. Mandela if anything happened to the 73-year-old patriarch of the black liberation struggle.

He was one of the most radical and popular of alliance leaders and an indefatigable campaigner, spending most weekends stumping the country, addressing mass meetings in fly-blown townships.

His commitment to peaceful change was increasingly apparent as the township death toll soared past 8,000 in the three years following President F.W. de Klerk's unbanning of black opposition activity.

Just last weekend he issued a rare public denunciation of the armed struggle against white rule still being pursued by the far-left Pan Africanist Congress (PAC).

"I don't accept people calling for war...because I feel we have achieved something in this country where the oppressors in the past are actually talking to us and are showing readiness to negotiate for democratic elections," he told a rally.

Bosnian Muslims block Srebrenica evacuation

SARAJEVO (R) — Local Muslim leaders blocked an attempt Saturday by U.S. relief workers to evacuate refugees from the besieged Bosnian town of Srebrenica, a U.N. spokesman said.

John McMillan, spokesman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Sarajevo, told reporters the authorities insisted people could only be evacuated in covered trucks and the U.N. convoy in the town had none.

"It does not look like we are going to be able to evacuate anyone today because the trucks are not covered," Mr. McMillan said.

He said the local authorities had refused to allow people to board the trucks after they delivered food and medicine to Srebrenica Saturday.

He said the local leaders were afraid people would suffer exposure on the open trucks because of the cold temperatures in the area.

Srebrenica has been blockaded by Serb forces since the start of the civil war involving Bosnia's Serbs, Muslims and Croats one year ago.

Mr. McMillan told reporters nine aid trucks pulled into Srebrenica at 12.30 p.m. (1030 GMT) and were immediately surrounded by civilians desperate to leave.

He said the convoy, which set out from Belgrade Saturday, had encountered no serious obstacles.

U.N. peacekeeping authorities said earlier Saturday Serb forces besieging the town for a year were closing in on Srebrenica after capturing hamlets on its outskirts.

"The town is quiet militarily at the moment," Mr. McMillan said. Two convoys which reached the town last week were blocked from taking out refugees but the last one, which arrived Thursday, managed to evacuate more than 1,500 refugees.

U.N. relief flights to and from Sarajevo were suspended for at least three days Saturday after Serb forces were spotted moving anti-aircraft guns within range of the Bosnian capital's airport, the U.N. spokesman said.

Mr. McMillan told reporters flights would be cancelled for at least three days.

He said the decision also reflected concern about a hostile Serb reaction to a U.N. no-fly rule over Bosnia which is due to take effect Monday.

"We temporarily interrupted the flights after we noticed the Serbs moving anti-aircraft weapons to within range of the airport," Mr. McMillan said.

"That's the main reason, but we're also concerned about the Serb response to the no-fly zone," he said.

Commander Barry Frewer, a spokesman for the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Sarajevo, said the Serb advance had forced more refugees to take refuge in Srebrenica itself, which has been blockaded by the Serb forces for a year.

Commander Frewer told reporters in the Bosnian capital the Srebrenica "pocket" of villages had shrunk noticeably even as the Bosnian Serb commander agreed Friday to observe a ceasefire from 2:00 p.m. (1200 GMT) Saturday.

"Towns hitherto in the hands of Muslims or the outside of Srebrenica have indeed fallen under Serb control now. No question that the pocket has shrunk somewhat," Commander Frewer said.

Commander Frewer said clashes around Srebrenica, which continued this week despite an earlier ceasefire agreement covering all of Bosnia, had subsided late Friday. Only sporadic gunfire around Srebrenica was reported by mid-morning Saturday.

"We have no indication right now of any attack planned on the town of Srebrenica itself. One only trusts that the status quo will hold now," commander said.

He said the U.N.'s six militant observers stationed in the area did not know how close the Serbs had come to Srebrenica but estimates midway through last week put them five to six kilometres outside.

General Ratko Mladic, commander of the Bosnian Serb army, said Friday he would allow a Canadian contingent of U.N. peacekeeping troops to enter Srebrenica only "over my dead body." The Canadians are waiting in nearby Tuzla.

But Commander Frewer said Gen. Mladic would be prepared to discuss their deployment at a meeting of rival army chiefs Monday at Sarajevo Airport.

"We will see how serious Mladic is," Commander Frewer said.

He said Bosnian leaders, who boycotted a similar military meeting last Tuesday, had agreed in principle to attend Monday's meeting if the ceasefire held around Srebrenica.

Meanwhile two Muslim soldiers were killed Friday in a fresh round of fighting between Bosnian Muslims and Croats, who are nominal allies, in the volatile, jointly-controlled town of Travnik, a U.N. officer said.

Congolese triplets born in 3 towns, 3 different days

BRAZZAVILLE, Congo (AP) — A Congolese woman, apparently unaware that she was pregnant with triplets, gave birth in three different villages during a three-day walk over 60 miles (100 kilometres), the Health Ministry said.

Bernadette Obelobou, 34, had the first child in the northern village of Otsikaka last Monday with the help of a midwife, said Apollinaire Nganga, director of the Public Health Ministry.

Obelobou recovered and she and her husband began a journey south. After walking 31 miles (50 kilometres), Mrs. Obelobou bore a second child in Lekana the next day. Sensing something was wrong, Mrs. Obelobou visited a hospital the following day in Djambala and gave birth to the third child after walking another 31 miles. The mother and three babies — two girls and a boy — are doing well, the ministry said.

World War II bomb disrupts Brussels Airport

BRUSSELS (AP) — A World War II bomb disrupted traffic at Brussels International Airport after it was unearthed by construction workers, news reports said. The runway at Zaventem Airport was closed for 20 minutes after the bomb was discovered Monday afternoon. Some planes were diverted to provincial airports.

Army bomb-disposal experts removed the 85 kilo (187 pound) bomb harmless with a controlled explosion. Reports said the bomb was made in the United States. It was likely dropped during a World War II bombardment of German-occupied Belgium. The bomb was found by workers building an extension to the airport.

Allen's lawyer accuses Connecticut Police

NEW YORK (AP) — Attorneys for Mia Farrow had pitched a deal to drop sexual abuse charges against Woody Allen in return for a \$8 million payoff, a lawyer for Allen has testified. The offer came during an August 1992 meeting in a Manhattan lawyers' office, shortly after Mrs. Farrow alleged that Allen abused their 7-year-old adopted daughter, Dylan, said attorney Irwin Tenenbaum. Mrs. Farrow was represented at the meeting by attorney David Levitt, who proposed the deal. Lawyer Alan Derowitz also sat in on the meeting at Ms. Farrow's request, Mr. Tenenbaum testified. Allen said three weeks ago, and Farrow's lawyers confirmed, that a panel of sex abuse experts from Yale-New Haven hospital cleared him of the charges. The report, which the couple asked to be kept secret, has been turned over to prosecutors deciding whether to bring charges against Allen. Allen, 57, and Ms. Farrow, 48, are fighting for custody of Dylan, their biological son Satchel, 15, and adopted son Moses, 15. The actress accused Allen of molesting Dylan at her country house last Aug. 4.

When is a nude musical not nude? when it's in Japan

TOKYO (AP) — The cast of the musical Oh Calcutta overcame opening-night jitters Friday and played to an appreciative Japanese audience. But it was hard not to be a bit nervous — after all, they covered up. "It felt a little uncomfortable, really, we're so used to doing it naked," said cast member Dawn Monago. Performing naked, however, was not an option in Japan, where obscenity laws forced producers to back away from the full frontal nudity that made the play famous. The restrictions highlight debate over the laws, which many people consider obsolete and contradictory. The bare breasts of women cast members weren't an issue. But displays of genitals and pubic hair are forbidden. Producers agreed to have the actors wear G-strings, and the cast had to sign documents promising they wouldn't take any artistic license. Just to make sure, plainclothes police were on hand to keep an eye on things. "There were nine officers, I think," said Montgomery Mackenzie of the production company SSP Inc. "That seems like a lot...probably some of them just wanted to see the show." Producers said they would have preferred to stage the play as scripted, but that they could live with the restrictions during the two-month run planned for Japan. "What's important is what the show says, not whether it shows genitals," said director Ron Nash.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Coup leaders pin blame on Gorbachev

MOSCOW (AP) — Twelve men who were once among the most powerful in the Soviet Union go on trial next week for plotting the August 1991 coup. Their defence is expected to be simple: Gorbachev inspired it all. Two of the accused conspirators — former Vice President Gennady Yanayev and politburo member Oleg Shenin — gave their version of the coup in interviews with the Associated Press this week. They said former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev secretly pushed them to declare emergency rule and then backed out as the plot failed, leaving them to take the blame and the country to collapse. "Really, his own idea was carried forward by his closest circle... whenever any critical situation in the country required unpopular measures, we always tried to cover up Gorbachev's role so his democratic image would not suffer," Mr. Yanayev said. Gorbachev denies the accusation and has agreed to testify at the non-jury, military trial, which starts Wednesday and could last several weeks.

Spain Socialists battle party rift

MADRID (R) — Leaders of Spain's ruling Socialist Party met Saturday to seek solutions to damaging internal divisions and answers to corruption charges which are threatening their re-election chances. The 31 members of the Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) Federal Executive Committee, headed by Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, went into closed session to grapple with what commentators agree is the crisis in the party's 10 years in power. With general elections due later this year, the PSOE's popular standing has been rapidly eroded by a series of corruption scandals, notably charges of illegal funding of the party by Socialist-leaning companies in the late 1980s. The party number three, administration chief Jose Maria "Piki" Benegas, has already offered to resign over the "Filas" case, named after a Barcelona-based group of consultancy firms which allegedly channelled one billion pesetas (about \$8.5 million) to the Socialists.

2 French policemen hurt in clash

TOURCOING, France (R) — Two policemen were injured and dozen people arrested when violence broke out overnight after the death of a North African teenager shot by a policeman earlier this week, police said Saturday. About 250 youths took to the streets of this north France town for several hours to confront riot police with petrol bombs and stones, police said. The youths set fire to a shop and six vehicles before being cleared from the streets by police firing tear gas grenades and swinging batons, witnesses said. The clashes were sparked by the death in hospital Friday of Rachid Ardjouni, 17, three days after being shot in the head while running away from police investigating a group of joyriders. Four policemen were hurt and several cars were set ablaze in earlier protests Thursday. In two other police shootings in France this week, two suspected petty criminals were killed.

10 die in Taiwan fire

TAIPEI (R) — Ten people were killed and seven injured when fire swept through a four-storey commercial and residential building in the northern Taiwan town of Shulin before dawn Saturday, police said. They said they were not ruling out arson. Evening newspapers reported that police suspected the blaze erupted after several motorcycles parked outside the building were deliberately set on fire. The blaze gutted an unlicensed nightclub on the ground floor which had a bar and dance floor. Thick smoke poured into apartments on the upper floors and most of the victims suffocated, police said. Some residents escaped by climbing down signs on the outside of the building after its stairway caught fire.

India tornado toll may rise to 125

MURSHIDABAD, India (R) — Up to 125 people may have been killed when a tornado whipped through five villages in eastern India, tossing farm workers in the air like dolls and hurling vehicles across fields, officials said Saturday. Rescue workers clawing through the debris of the farming villages in Murshidabad district of West Bengal state recovered 60 bodies after the rare tornado roared through at 200 kph (120 mph) as residents were preparing their evening meals. "I saw a large ball of clouds advancing towards my house," said Imran Khan, a farmer in Khoshaspur village, about 250 kilometres north of Calcutta. "Then on the road I saw a bus full of passengers blown 40 feet in the air. It whirled around in the air twice and fell into a pond," Mr. Khan said. Rescue workers said all but one of the passengers had been killed. They said the toll could climb to 125 or more as many people, mostly children, were reported missing.

17 feared dead after trawler sinks

PORT STANLEY, Falkland Islands (R) — Seventeen crew members were feared dead after a Korean-owned fishing trawler abruptly listed and sank in calm seas off the Falkland Islands Friday, the islands' director of fisheries said. Rescue services recovered three bodies, but 14 men who left the Panamanian-registered Serrekunda 3 in a life raft were still missing after a day-long air and sea search. Another 15 crew members were rescued from their life-raft by British Royal Air Force helicopter and taken to Port Stanley, capital of the British-administered Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic.

U.N. warns Khmer Rouge could be outlawed

PHNOM PENH (R) — The head of U.N. peacekeepers in Cambodia warned the Khmer Rouge Saturday it had taken a dangerous step towards outlaw status by threatening to disrupt next month's national elections.

The guerrilla group responded by refusing to support a resolution from head of state Prince Norodom Sihanouk which demanded an end to all violence including attacks on U.N. peacekeepers.

Seven U.N. personnel have been killed in the past two weeks. The resolution was supported by the three other factions at a meeting of the all-faction Supreme National Council.

Khmer Rouge President Khieu Samphan sat stone-faced through the discussion on the resolution but later denounced what he called Vietnam's colonial ambitions over Cambodia.

Vietnam, the U.N. and diplomats in Phnom Penh dispute Khmer Rouge claims that Vietnamese troops are still in the country despite their announced withdrawal in 1989.

"No party or group has the right to stop this election," Yasushi Akashi, the head of the U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), told the meeting.

"The Cambodian people have shown that they want the election to go ahead and UNTAC will give them an election."

The council discussed security for the May 23-27 election after the killing of more than 100 people in the past month. UNTAC, which has 22,000 people, including 15,500 soldiers, has blamed much of the violence on the Khmer Rouge.

In the latest attack, a Japanese election volunteer and his Cambodian interpreter were killed Thursday morning. In his last radio messages the volunteer described the gunmen as Khmer Rouge guerrillas.

The Khmer Rouge put Cambodia through a reign of terror in the 1970s that killed a million people before they were ousted by a Vietnam invasion in December 1978.

They have vowed to stop the poll despite signing a peace accord with the other factions in October 1991.

In an interview in Friday's Phnom Penh Post, Khieu Samphan said violence would increase in the coming weeks.

"At this critical juncture of the peace process, it is essential to confront the security situation that has arisen because the Party of Democratic Kampuchea (PDK, the Khmer Rouge) has refused to take part in the election," Mr. Akashi said.

"Let me issue a solemn warning to the Party of Democratic Kampuchea that the party and its leaders will be held directly responsible for all the attacks it has taken out against UNTAC thus far and for any further attack it makes to disrupt the election by attacking UNTAC personnel whether Cambodian or non-Cambodian, or Cambodian voters, or ethnic Vietnamese."

Fighting intensifies between Azeris, Karabakh Armenians

GYANDZHA, Azerbaijan (AP) — Armenian forces launched fierce attacks Friday against Azerbaijan around the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, killing at least five Azerbaijani soldiers in intensive fighting.

Azerbaijani soldiers at a post near the city of Gyandzha were gearing up for further combat. Truckloads of fresh uniforms and food headed for the front and ammunition was sorted for distribution.

The Armenian troops pounded towns and villages in southwestern Azerbaijan along the border with Iran as well as Kelbajar, a strategically located Azerbaijani city in the land corridor between

Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh.

Azerbaijani military authorities in Gyandzha, formerly called Kirovabad, said the fighting in and around Kelbajar had trapped about 14,000 Azerbaijani civilians behind front lines.

Capt. Allahverdi Abasov said at least five Azerbaijani fighters were killed in Friday's fighting. There were no immediate reports on Armenian casualties.

Passersby looked on quietly as a truck with the bodies of two dead fighters arrived in Gyandzha. One soldier shouted, "martyrs, martyrs," to clear the crowd.

In southwestern Azerbaijan,

Armenian forces launched a new offensive, seizing one village and threatening several key regions along Azerbaijan's border with Iran, the ITAR-TASS News Agency reported.

The Armenian attacks were concentrated around the town of Fizuli, the ITAR-TASS agency said. Armenian forces seized the Azerbaijani village of Gushatly near Fizuli, which also suffered considerable damage in the attack.

Capturing Fizuli would be a major step in cutting off the Azerbaijani enclave of Nakhichevan from the rest of the country and would strengthen Armenia's control over its road to Nagorno-Karabakh.

Casualties were reported when Armenian forces also shelled the Azerbaijani settlements in the Kubatly, Zangelan and Lachin regions, the agency reported.

Both Azerbaijan and Armenian officials denied a ceasefire agreement had been reached. The Interfax News Agency had reported a ceasefire scheduled to begin at noon (0800 GMT) Friday had been broken by Russia.

An Armenian spokesman in Moscow, Mikit Kazarian, said that the only agreement reached Thursday was for both countries' prime ministers to meet in Moscow on April 13 on the conflict.

Yeltsin will not resign if he loses referendum

MOSCOW (Agencies) — With just over two weeks left before a vote on who will lead the country, President Boris Yeltsin intensified his campaign for votes.

Mr. Yeltsin said the April 25 referendum on whether the president or legislature should rule "is the fate of Russia, and you all realise this full well."

He said if he loses he would not resign but is ready to "face early elections, but keep the post of president until then," according to the ITAR-TASS News Agency.

The referendum is shaping up as the climax to the power struggle between Mr. Yeltsin and the Communist-dominated Congress of People's Deputies. Russia's highest parliamentary body.

"If there is no president, the power will be assumed by the most extremist forces, and the entire world will shudder," Mr. Yeltsin said. Portions of his meeting were broadcast on Russian Television.

In an apparent bid to win votes, Mr. Yeltsin also said he would repeal a decision earlier this week to raise gasoline prices and rents of state-owned apartments in the capital.

If he wins, and voters also call for new legislative elections, Mr. Yeltsin said he would take that as a sign the legislature has lost its power and he would use his presidential authority to fill the vacuum.

Mr. Yeltsin's main rival for power, legislative speaker Ruslan

Khasbulatov, told Russia's regional lawmakers earlier Friday that, while the referendum probably is important, it would not solve the country's main problem: The economy.

He criticised the country's central power structure, saying the referendum probably would result in early elections for the president and the lawmakers.

"A small group of new tycoons who are enriching themselves are closely connected with the existing political regime" and have become its main power base, Mr. Khasbulatov said.

Mr. Yeltsin Friday said those officials in Moscow responsible for drafting the laws raising the prices of gasoline and rent should be punished, the Interfax News Agency said.

Gasoline prices doubled Wednesday, from 40 rubles (about 5 cents) per litre to 80 rubles (about 10 cents) per litre, further angering drivers who have experienced several hikes in the past year.

Mr. Yeltsin, who has seen his authority stripped away by Congress, originally sought the vote as a way to settle the crisis by asking the people to pass judgment on his leadership.

Hardliners in the congress added more questions to the referendum, including one on his painful economic reforms that may prove embarrassing to the president. Besides the questions on his leadership and economic reform, the questions also ask

whether there should be new presidential and legislative elections.

The congress also set up rules for the referendum that make it harder for Mr. Yeltsin to win the vote. Pro-Yeltsin legislators Thursday asked Russia's constitutional court to clarify the voting rules.

At issue is the number of votes needed to make the referendum valid: A majority of people casting ballots or a majority of Russia's 106 million eligible voters. If the court rules it is the latter, it will be more difficult for Mr. Yeltsin to secure a victory.

Constitutional Court Chief Justice Valery Zorkin did not say when the court would rule.

Meanwhile Russia's ethnic Republic of Mordovia defied President Yeltsin Friday by refusing to reinstate its sacked leader, deepening a local crisis which mirrors the power struggle raging at national level.

ITAR-TASS News Agency said the Mordovian parliament appointed a new prime minister following an earlier vote of no confidence in local President Vasily Guslyannikov.

It ignored a Yeltsin decree that the removal of Mr. Guslyannikov was illegal.

"The decree of Boris Yeltsin, which instructed Guslyannikov to continue to carry out the responsibilities of president and leadership of the government, has been ignored," TASS said.

The new prime minister, who

will head the government instead of Mr. Guslyannikov, is Valery Shvetsov, formerly first deputy chairman of the Mordovian parliament.

The crisis in Mordovia, a small Central Russian region with a population of about one million, reflects in miniature the battle between Mr. Yeltsin and the Congress of People's Deputies.

In a separate development, Russia's chief economic reformer said Saturday that Moscow expects the Group of Seven leading industrial nations to offer at least as much aid this year as the \$24 billion they pledged in 1992.

Deputy Prime Minister Boris Fyodorov said it was vital that foreign aid should start producing tangible results this year to convince Russians that the West was serious about helping them.

Mr. Fyodorov, in charge of arguing Russia's case at a key meeting with G